U.PORTO

FLUP FACULDADE DE LETRAS
UNIVERSIDADE DO PORTO

2º Ciclo de Estudo

Mestrado em Filosofia Contemporânea

Incorrigibility: An Essay on Anscombe's Philosophy of Mind

César Gil Martins

M

2016

César Gil Martins

Incorrigibility: An Essay on Anscombe's Philosophy of Mind

Dissertação realizada no âmbito do Mestrado em Filosofia Contemporânea, orientada pela Professora Doutora Sofia Gabriela Assis de Morais Miguens

Faculdade de Letras da Universidade do Porto

setembro 2016

Incorrigibility: An Essay on Anscombe's Philosophy of Mind

César Gil Martins

Dissertação realizada no âmbito do Mestrado em Filosofia Contemporânea, orientada pela Professora Doutora Sofia Gabriela Assis de Morais Miguens

Membros do Júri

Professor Doutor Vítor Manuel Ferreira Ribeiro de Moura

Universidade do Minho

Professor Doutor Sofia Gabriela Assis de Morais Miguens

Faculdade de Letras – Universidade do Porto

Professor Doutor Paulo Jorge Delgado Pereira Tunhas

Faculdade de Letras – Universidade do Porto

Classificação obtida: 17 valores

In loving memory of my grandfather, António Gil

Contents

Abstract

Intention (1957) is perhaps the most well-known work by G.E.M. Anscombe. In this dissertation I put this work aside and considered some of her other philosophical writings. Through the consideration of four articles by the author, I sought to sketch a plausible picture of incorrigibility in the context of philosophy of language, philosophy of mind and metaphysics. Those articles are: *Events in the Mind* (1963), *The First Person* (1975), *Substance* (1964), and *The Intentionality of Sensation* (1965). By proposing some fundamental distinctions I believe one can grasp the importance of incorrigible statements, i.e., mental reports framed in the first person in the present indicative, in consideration of the contexts previously mentioned. Moreover, by proposing some of these distinctions I believe that certain aspects of the author's work in those articles will be understood with more clarity.

Key-words: incorrigibility; mind; language; metaphysics; perception

List of abbreviations

CLS - Conception of X as a lump of stuff

CE - Cartesian ego

DIS – Derived incorrigible statements

DUS – Description of the underlying structure of X

FP - First person

FIS – Full-blown incorrigible statements

L – List of descriptions of sensible properties which one is more or less immediately acquainted with

NSP – Neither substantial nor substance-involving predicates

SDT – Sensory deprivation tank

SIP – Substance-involving predicates

SP – Substantial predicates

TP – Third person

Introduction

In this dissertation I will focus my attention on four articles by the twentieth-century philosopher G. E. M. Anscombe (1919 – 2001). I will analyse the articles one by one. The underlying theme of the dissertation as a whole is incorrigibility. This theme ties together both the chapters of the present work and the author's articles. I will consider my overarching theme in a systematic way by first sketching my principal distinctions and justifying these in a plausible way. This dissertation comprises four chapters which we will consider in this introduction. Note that I believe that it is important that this dissertation is read along with the source material so as to facilitate that which is being said throughout.

Chapter 1, "Taxonomy of Mental Reports", is based on Anscombe's article *Events in the Mind* (1963). There I get hold of an initial understanding of my theme. In that chapter my interest was threefold: i) to give a deflationary account – in contrast to Descartes' - of that which constitutes a mental event; ii) establishing the 'asymmetry' between the first and third person in the present indicative in *mental reports*; and iii) give a first presentation of the class of so-called incorrigible statements. I will concentrate here on the latter points. One can sensibly understand a mental report as a statement which describes an individual's 'inner life', a matter-of-description which is non-publicly available. What does this mean? Throughout this dissertation the distinction between public availability and non-public availability has been established as a defining trait of matters-of-description. I am focused on accessibility in principal of such-and-such. In this sense, one's 'inner life' is only available to the individual in question deeming that specific matter-of-description non-publicly available. This being said it is quite straightforward that when one describes one's 'inner life' one will base one's utterance on that which one is describing, i.e., one's 'inner life'. These mental reports are those which are framed in the first person of the present indicative. It may also be the case that one wants to describe the 'inner life' of some other individual. Now, it is the case that one cannot access another individual's 'inner life' in the same way as one accesses his own. In other words, while one bases descriptions of one's 'inner life' on one's 'inner life' in mental reports framed in the first person of the present indicative, this is not the case with mental reports framed in the third person in the present indicative. When one describes the 'inner life' of some individual one bases one's mental report on particular behaviours of that individual's body, which are publicly available. That this is the case may lead to

contradiction with respect to first person descriptions of that individual's 'inner life'. In other words, it may be the case that particular behaviours – or lack thereof - of such individual do not necessarily imply coherence with respect to his first person report. Contrast this with mental reports framed in the first person in the present indicative. It would be quite implausible to assert that this may happen to an individual who wants to describe his 'inner life', i.e., that he would base such description on his bodily behaviours. It is this distinction which has been dubbed as an 'asymmetry'.

The overarching theme has to do with the mental reports which are framed in the first person in the present indicative, i.e., incorrigible statements. As we have seen, these statements describe one's 'inner life' and, *if pressed*[1], are justified by appealing to said matter-of-description. That the possible justification of these statements is like this can be understood as deeming them as incorrigible, as describing that which only the utterer in question can access. In the first chapter my proposal was to categorize these incorrigible statements into two kinds: *full-blown incorrigible statements (FIS)* and *derived incorrigible statements (DIS)*. The former describe our 'inner lives' *tout court* while the latter are reformulated statements based upon non-mental reports framed in the first person in the present indicative. These reformulated statements capture the proper first person perspective of the utterer of such-and-such a statement. In other words, these reformulated statements emphasize the original statement – which in most or all cases describes a publicly available state of affairs – while also bringing to the fore that one is conscious of thinking such-and-such, which is a non-publicly available state of affairs.

In order to distinguish these statements even further, I propose to classify FIS as members of Group A and DIS as members of Group B. The former group is subdivided into A1 and A2 depending on the specific verbs which we encounter. In A1 we have statements which contain the verb "to feel" while in A2 we have statements which contain such verbs as "to see", "to hear", etc., being that we will be particularly emphasizing statements which contain the verb "to see". Statements from A2 were of my interest in

[1] Note that this is more of a theoretical point and not a way in which one will proceed in normal linguistic interactions. In other words, we seem to understand in a straightforward sense the incorrigibility of such reports thereby leaving them unwarranted. If in principal only I am in a position to access this matter-of-description then the justification of incorrigible statements is circular: I will justify the statement by merely repeating the statement in question. E.g. "I feel pain *because* I feel pain". By considering this one realizes that justifying these statements is in a sense innocuous. Again, the point of speaking of the justification of these statements is to make the theoretical distinction between mental reports in the first person and in the third person completely evident.

Chapter 3 and 4, especially concerning the phrase giving the direct object of these verbs and the verbs themselves.

Chapter 2, "A-users and the Rest of Us", is based on *The First Person* (1975)[2]. There I sought to establish two things: i) to reconcile Anscombe's view that 'I' is not an expression whose function is to refer, with the more or less common sense view that 'I' refers to '*this* body'; and ii) that this reconciliation is tied with the reformulation of non-mental reports framed in the first person which we encounter in B. A common feature of incorrigible statements, i.e., statements from A and B, is that the particular 'I' being used does not refer to '*this* body'. This seems to be the case because descriptions of one's 'inner life' do not describe particular behaviours of '*this* body' but one's 'inner life', which is non-publicly available. These statements contrast with statements like "I am sitting" for what is here being described is publicly available, particularly the position of such-and-such a body in a particular environment. It is quite clear that the 'I' in that statement does refer to '*this* body'. Now I believe that one can hold that these are two different uses of 'I' which appear in these two different linguistic contexts, i.e., in descriptions of one's 'inner life' and in descriptions of publicly available states of affairs. Furthermore, it is in reformulated statements from B which this can be thoroughly grasped for they appear simultaneously – "*I* think that 'I am sitting'".

One of Anscombe's principal theses in her paper is that 'I' can only refer to some kind of Cartesian Ego (CE) and that reflections on this object leads us into various problems which at least seem not to have a solution. The author uses this to question the assumption that 'I' is a term "whose logical role is to make a reference, *at all*"[3] thereby putting aside such problems as stemming from "language itself being as it were possessed of an imagination"[4]. That 'I' – in the particular context of descriptions of one's 'inner life' - can only refer to some kind of CE was reinstated in the chapter but the conclusion that that 'I' does not refer was sought in a different fashion through the consideration of the (possibly) paradoxical conclusions that are implied by assuming the existence of such an object. As such, the author's principal claim is not objected to but is plausibly ameliorated, I claim, by accepting that there are two uses of 'I'. One can see this by

[2] A paper which is without a doubt a masterpiece of twentieth-century philosophy.
[3] Anscombe, G. 1975: 32.
[4] Anscombe, G. 1975: 32.

considering the way in which the supposed two uses avoid some criticism of Anscombe's position as is considered in Chapter 2.

In Chapter 3, "On *Substance*", which is based on the author's article *Substance* (1964) I directed my attention to statements from A2. Now these particular statements are quite interesting in that the same statement can be held as describing publicly available state of affairs or one's 'inner life'. This is what distinguishes them from statements from A1. In this chapter my objectives were twofold: i) to show that what was previously said is plausible via the consideration of specific predicates in play in these statements; and ii) to grasp a certain conception of substance so as to expand our understanding of that which is publicly available. As stated by the author, there are two kinds of predicates which presuppose a certain conception of substance: substantial predicates and substance-involving predicates[5]. The use of these predicates presuppose that that which is being described is made up of some kind of *stuff*, i.e., that the such-and-such is a physical entity. There are other predicates, called 'secondary quality words', which do not necessarily imply such a conception. Statements which include these describe such properties as colours, sounds, etc. Now one may understand substantial predicates as being used to categorize such-and-such into a specific substantial kind. In a sense, these predicates are implicit groupings of substance-involving and secondary-quality words. Depending on the relevance of the predicates which are grouped, one can be or not in a position to thoroughly grasp if that which one is describing is publicly available or not. Furthermore, one can be in a position where one is describing a publicly available such-and-such which is not made up of *stuff*. This is the case when the properties being considered are those which are described in statements including secondary quality words, the grouping of which are the basis for the specific substantial predicate being used in these situations.

When one is describing e.g. the colours of some X one may not be in a position to establish that that X is a physical entity, a hologram or a mirage[6], or a mental image – which is an occurrence in one's 'inner life'. This is plausibly the case because these predicates do not necessarily imply a conception of that which is being described as e.g. the colours of such-and-such. As Anscombe writes:

> [Y]ou can suppose a man to see a coloured expanse without there having to be any substance (or, of course, collection of substances) *whose* expanse, or part of whose

[5] Statements which include these describe such properties as e.g. 'melting at 50ºC', etc.
[6] These are publicly available but not made up of some sort of *stuff*.

> expanse, it is. One of the problems of epistemology that first strikes one – did first strike me – is: how do I know the things I look at have behinds? Why shouldn't they have the sort of merely phenomenal existence a rainbow has? This question arises because colour, together with its determinations of shape and size, is not substance-involving.[7]

Furthermore, one does use these predicates to describe one's 'inner life'. This opens the possibility of such predicates being used to describe non-publicly available states of affairs. Here we arrive at an important point about incorrigible statements. Even if one uses these predicates to describe such publicly available things as rainbows, which are not made up of *stuff*, one can be wrong. That is, one can incorrectly describe that X for it is in principle accessible to others. Being that one's 'inner life' is necessarily only accessible to the individual in question, one may plausibly claim that the concept of truth does not apply to statements where these predicates are used. In another way, I take it that one can only possibly determine as true or false statements which describe matters-of-description which are in principal available to others. To say that a description of a matter-of-description which is only available to *me* is true implies that that statement is only true *for me* which undermines, I believe, the concept of truth as such. This being said, one can use these predicates in statements which can in principle be attributed a truth-value and in statements which plausibly cannot. The range of usage of said predicates leaves one in a position where one cannot determine *a prori* the specific availability of the matter-of-description of the statement, if the statement is intended as describing such-and-such. In other words, one cannot know just by considering the statement the specific availability of that which is being described.

In Chapter 4, "How to Understand Sensation-Reports", which is based on Anscombe's *The Intentionality of Sensation* (1965) I continue my investigation into the statements previously mentioned, i.e., statements from A2 which contain the so-called 'secondary-quality words'. Furthermore, I considered in "On *Substance*" these statements as possibly abstracted from their specific context of utterance so as to make a point about the applicability of such predicates in the particular linguistic contexts explored, i.e., in describing publicly available and non-publicly available states of affairs. In this chapter I sought to make two fundamental points: i) that one can speak of that which one e.g. sees in incorrigible statements of A2 without with this either implying the reification of that which is *seen* or that one's sense-organ is being affected by e.g. a mental image; and ii)

[7] Anscombe, G. 1964: 39.

that the verbs which we encounter in statements of this ilk are necessarily having their intentional usage. Note that the particular verb may be having its intentional usage without necessarily implying that we are dealing with a statement which describes one's 'inner life'. Now what does this mean? That is, what is an intentional usage? Anscombe claims that:

> Intentionality, whose name is taken from intention and expresses these characteristics of the concept *intention*, is found also in connection with many other concepts. I shall argue that among these are concepts of sensation.[8]

The characteristics which are alluded to in the citation are a) "possible non-existence of the object"[9]; b) "non-substitutability of different descriptions of the object, where it does exist"[10]; and c) "possible indeterminacy of the object"[11]. In a sense, we have already partially covered these in the consideration of the 'secondary-quality words' in the particular context of incorrigible statements from A2. These characteristics stem from the particular verbs in these statements which, as the author suggests, express concepts of sensation which are marked by intentionality. Suppose that we are considering the statement "I see a red table" whose matter-of-description is my 'inner life'. In this case the verb "to see" is having its intentional usage. In the same way as one would ask for the direct object of the verb without implying the reification of *direct object* – which is a grammatical notion – the author asks for the intentional object of the verb, which is given by the same phrase giving the direct object, i.e., "a red table".

> I will now define an intentional verb as a verb taking an intentional object; intentional objects are the sub-class of direct objects characterized by these three connected features[12].

This being said, asking for the intentional object of the verb also does not imply the reification of *intentional object*. That is, if one were asked "What do you see?" – as a reaction to the statement "In see a red table" – one would respond with "a red table" without with this implying that 'what' one sees is an intentional object. I will explore the reasoning I just outlined in more detail in Chapter 4. In contrast to the intentional usage of the verb we have the material usage of the verb which takes a material object. This

[8] Anscombe, G. 1965: 4.
[9] Anscombe, G. 1965: 4.
[10] Anscombe, G. 1965: 5.
[11] Anscombe, G. 1965: 6.
[12] Anscombe, G. 1965: 6.

usage covers the cases where that which one is describing is publicly available for evaluation. Note that this usage cannot be established abstracted from the particular context of utterance for this depends upon one's knowledge of the specific availability of that which is being described. As such, one need not know that which one is describing in order to interpret the verb in its intentional usage while the material usage is limited to contexts where one is knowledgeable of the specific matter-of-description – which is publicly available. One notes that it is this supposed possibility of not knowing that which one is describing in order to give the intentional object of the verb that opens the possibility of the secondary-quality words being used in the linguistic contexts previously presented. Given that in the case of incorrigible statements from A2 there is no material object – no publicly available state of affairs – which one is describing, one can only give the intentional object which is not to be understood as *real* entity, i.e., "a red table" as describing some *real* such-and-such in my 'inner life', but as a grammatical feature of these statements which serve to broaden our understanding of them.

We have covered in a simplified way that which will be treated in the dissertation as a whole. Note that there may be some incongruences between Anscombe's work - or between established interpreters of her work - and my take on this theme and the articles here mentioned. Nonetheless, I hope that the points made in the dissertation were made with sufficient clarity so as to enable further discussion of the theme in question and heighten the interest in this most remarkable author.

1. Taxonomy of mental reports[13]

Let us start by asking a fundamental question: what is a mental event? Even though the meaning of this question might seem rather straightforward as stated, if one considers it more closely, its meaning is not clear. One can equally answer the same question with a statement giving an exemplar and a statement giving a definition. This consideration may lead us to clarify this ambiguity by stating the original question in two ways, which can be put as such: (a) "what is an example of a mental event?"[14] and (b) "what is the *ontological* difference between an event in the mind and an event understood generally?" This is in some sense a platonic distinction. The wording of (b) may be curious but I am relying on the assumption that 'to give a definition of *x*' has as a consequence the 'giving a way of distinguishing *x*', with a particular motive, i.e., the distinction is generally not aimed at all there is, but at a particular sub-set of what is - it seems quite obvious that a mental event is not a chair; being the case that what fuels our inquiry is a rather subtle distinction.

The precise relationship between the possible answers to the two questions which stem from the original is obscure. Is it possible to answer (b) negatively and still answer (a) positively? What would a negative answer to (b) mean? That the proposed distinction is impossible?; or[15] that we are not able to establish a distinction? "Able" here seems to mean something different in (b) than in (a). For example, even though the answer to (b) may be negative, it still seems that a positive answer to (a) may plausibly be given - is it implausible to give an example of a game without having a thorough definition of 'game'? Nevertheless, to give a positive answer to (a) involves a certain relationship with (b), but a *weaker* one. If one can give an example of a mental event, one is able in a sense to 'distinguish a mental event', even if one is not able to give (or it is impossible to give) an airtight definition. In other words, it seems that answering (a) positively does not necessarily imply consistency between the answers nor an ontological output from (b). To avoid this discrepancy I will slightly alter (b) into (b*): "How do we distinguish an event in the mind from an event understood generally". This is useful because having (a) and (b*) as stated makes it impossible to give a positive answer to one and a negative

[13] Based on *Events in the Mind* (1963).
[14] Obviously one can give more than one example; but for the sake of simplicity, I will maintain the question as such.
[15] The disjunction is inclusive. Note that it is always difficult to clarify, when it is the case that only one of these options is true, which one of them *is* true.

answer to the other; gaining consistency and specifying a methodology for answering (a). Note that a possible answer to (b*) does not *necessarily* imply that it has been obtained via an empirical investigation of the brain, nor, looking back, that 'an empirical investigation of the brain' or any other method has ontological output, i.e., answering (b*) is in a sense neutral. So, what is a possible answer to (b*)? As I tried to clarify, this will be a choice of methodology. The ability to 'distinguish mental events' may be maintained as an interpretive ability based on linguistic understanding which may be used to predict the behaviour of another human animal or to understand said behaviour. Anscombe's motive is to understand the linguistic behaviour of human animals in order to clarify certain relationships between their linguistic behaviour and the world. This implies that to answer (a) we will have to look at how human animals report what goes on in the mind.

I wished to clarify what is meant by the question "what is a mental event?" in order to set the tone of Anscombe's work which, for our purposes, has a first seat in her article *Events in the Mind* (1963) by bringing forth the introductory features of her work: a quest for linguistic understanding and not a strict inquiry into ontological grounds in the philosophy of mind. An excellent example of this is the compelling last words of her paper:

> My main conclusion is the engaging one that one thing that is not a "thought" in the sense Descartes gave to the Latin and French for "thought", is: a thought.[16]

This statement shows her interest in our linguistic understanding of e.g. what "thought" means in our context, which may be generalized to "mental events". The wording of (b*) contains the phrase "events in the mind" and not "mental events" for a reason: to bring out a certain conception of the mind; "in" is crucial. So, one asks, what does "in" mean in this context? One notices that "in" in the context of certain mental reports is taken for granted as with when one says "I think that I can solve the Riemann Hypothesis"; a possible response to this report would seem rather odd[17] put as such: "*where* does this thinking take *place*?" The place is obvious: in the mind. But why is it obvious? Can we delineate the frontiers of this *place*? Similar questions lead us, as led Anscombe, to view what was meant by the latter question in seventeenth century philosophy, particularly Descartes', which will help us get closer to a response to (a).

---

[16] Anscombe, G. 1963: 63.

[17] A plausible response to a non-mathematician would be "Are you mad?"; a plausible response to a mathematician would be the same.

Again, the reflection upon the seventeenth century mind-body distinction will be viewed through the lens of an understanding of mental reports which is coherent with are previously established methodology. This will mean that the particular metaphysical claims of the Cartesian conception of mind will be held as a consequence of a certain linguistic understanding of mental reports, which is a view shared by Anscombe and by other twentieth-century philosophers: this will justify my use of some quotes from Rorty.[18]. That language influences certain philosophical distinctions can be upheld if one reflects upon the reason why the mind-body distinction, as we know it, did not appear in Greek philosophy. Let us consider Rorty's comment on a passage by Wallace Matson:

> One can sum up both of Matson's points by saying that in Greek there is no way to divide "conscious states" or "states of consciousness" – events in an inner life – from events in an "external world". Descartes, on the other hand, used "thought" to cover doubting, understanding, affirming, denying, willing, refusing, imagining, and feeling, and said that even if I dream that I see light "properly speaking this in me is called feeling, and used in this precise sense that is no other thing than thinking." Once Descartes had entrenched this way of speaking it was possible for Locke to use "idea" in a way which has no Greek equivalent at all, as meaning "whatsoever is the object of the understanding when a man thinks" or "every immediate object of the mind in thinking".[19]

The merits of the view that language influences certain philosophical distinctions will not be elaborated in our inquiry, which does not mean that this point is superfluous for our understanding of Anscombe's article. As we have just seen, one can hold that the particular way "thought" was understood by Descartes set the stage for the mind-body distinction by incorporating the class of the so-called psychological verbs under the head of "thought". These verbs – "feeling", "understanding", etc. – are important for two reasons: i) the presence of these verbs in the context of a statement lead to the particular understanding that a mental state or event is being expressed; ii) the presence of these verbs in the context of a statement reveals the 'asymmetry' between the first and third person in the present indicative. Let us consider the latter point first.

[18] Note that I am not endorsing the claim that Anscombe's philosophical positions are identical with those of Rorty; the correspondence I have established between them is limited to the view that language influences certain philosophical distinctions like the one presently at hand.
[19] Rorty, R. 1980: 47, 48.

1.1 The 'asymmetry' between the first and third person in the present indicative

1.1.1. The first person in the present indicative

That there is a difference between the first (FP) and third person (TP) in mental reports is evident in the way we justify those statements, framed in those two distinct forms. To clarify this distinction it is necessary to elaborate a further distinction between two different kinds of mental reports framed in the FP, which I will call *full-blown incorrigible statements* (FIS) and *derived incorrigible statements* (DIS). [20] The meaning of "incorrigible" is tied with the possible way in which some statements are justified. It is noteworthy that the word "indubitable", which is used in the language of the Cartesian conception of mind, also captures the particular way some statements are possibly justified, lying the difference in the implication that the employment of those terms has for the truth-value of those statements. That the particular way those statements are justified implies that they are necessarily true is a claim which is avoided by using the term "incorrigible", which I believe is neutral in this sense.

Before we focus on the way these particular statements are possibly justified let us focus on what is being described by statements framed in the FP which will help us clarify with more detail what is to be understood as mental reports. Let us consider the statements "I feel pain" and "I am walking". One notices that it is the case that only one of those statements describes an *observable* state of affairs, being that the ocular imagery already implies that this is so. For what would it mean to observe what is being described by the statement "I feel pain"? Let us focus on another angle which puts aside the ocular imagery and avoids the prison of circular reasoning. A statement framed in the FP which describes a publicly available state of affairs has different consequences from those which do not. If one takes the statement "I am walking", one notices two things i) that 'I' refers to '*this* body' and ii) that the truth-value of this statement is dependent upon the 'exteriorized' confirmation that the description is adequate. These two points are closely connected. Consider the latter point, especially what is being meant by "exteriorized". Even though the statement "I am walking" is framed in the FP, what is being described is publicly available for evaluation, being the case that that statement can possibly be attributed a truth-value. That this is so is a direct consequence of that which is being referred to by 'I' in that particular statement - "I am walking" is here meaning "*This* body

[20] Of course, the statements which we are considering are mental reports.

is at the moment making such-and-such movements". These two claims cannot be made relative to the statement "I feel pain". What this statement describes is not a matter-of-description which is publicly available for evaluation. A plausible objection to this claim can be the realization that one can infer that such-and-such is in pain via certain behaviours which, in normal circumstances, accompany 'the state of being in pain'. While this can be true, it may not be necessarily the case. One can be in pain without demonstrating that one is in pain via uttering the statement in question or via other non-linguistic behaviours. When this is the case, the statement is not describing a publicly available state of affairs but one's 'inner life'. The phrase "inner life" is here being employed to bring out a distinction which is made in the Cartesian conception of mind between mental events and events understood generally. While this distinction is made by Anscombe, this does not mean that mental events are reified in the same sense as in the conception of mind previously mentioned. As we will see, Anscombe is not reducing those particular events in our 'inner lives' to such-and-such behaviours, which, once again, does not mean that they are being reified.

Until now we have distinguished statements which are framed in the FP into two broad groups. On the one hand, we have statements which describe publicly available states of affairs; on the other, statements which describe our 'inner lives'. To simplify the matter, I will organize the statements of the latter kind into Group A. The particular example of a statement from Group A which we considered is a rather special kind of statement because the particular words which are being used to describe such-and-such are words which are only applied in the specific context of descriptions of our 'inner lives'. There are other statements which are included in Group A which contain verbs which does not necessarily imply this.

Let us consider as an example the statement "I see red". The use of this verb does not necessarily imply that who uttered that statement wants to describe his 'inner life'. Depending on how we understand the particular use of the verb we will understand the particular application of the words which are being used to describe such-and-such in that statement. This is because the use of the verb "to see" can be present in statements which either describe publicly available states of affairs or in statements which describe our 'inner lives'. What clarifies this ambiguity is the context in which these statements are uttered. If one wants to describe one's 'inner life', the verb "to see" is having what Anscombe calls its *intentional* usage; if one wants to describe a publicly available state

of affairs, the verb is having its *material* usage.[21] Focusing on the words which are being used to describe such-and-such, when the verb is having its intentional use, those words are having what Anscombe calls their *secondary* application; and, by default, when the verb is having its material use, those words are having their *primary* application. Now that the ambiguity is dissolved one can attend to what is meant by the statement in these two distinct cases. When the verb "to see" is having its material use 'I' refers to '*this* body' which implies that what is being described as seen can be confirmed as adequate. As such, this understanding of the statement excludes it from Group A because what is being described is a matter-of-description which is publicly available.[22] The other case, i.e., when the verb is having its intentional use, constitutes the right kind of statement to be included in Group A, being the case that what is being described is one's 'inner life'.[23] It is noteworthy that one can clarify this ambiguity by noticing that the specific application of the words being used to describe such-and-such do not have the same consequences. Consider the statement "I see a flamboyant woman". This statement can mean "*This* body is seeing a flamboyant woman" and "I see a flamboyant woman in my mind's eye". If one understands the statement in the former sense one can plausibly confront who uttered it with such questions as "Where did you see her?" or "Did you talk to her?" These questions are not plausible in the latter interpretation: as Anscombe says "[a]n image cannot in this sense have consequences, be the protasis for an apodosis"[24], i.e., cannot be the logical antecedent in a conditional statement.[25]

We have distinguished between two kinds of statements which are to be included in Group A: statements which contain the verb "to feel" and statements which contain such verbs as "to see", "to hear", "to smell", etc. in their intentional use. For the sake of clarity I will classify the former statements as forming a sub-group called A1, and the latter statements as forming the sub-group A2. Both statements from A1 and A2 describe our 'inner lives' and this is evident for three reasons i) 'I' does not refer to '*this* body'; ii) the verbs are having their intentional use; and iii) the words which are being employed in

[21] In Chapter 3 and 4 we will consider this theme in more depth.
[22] What is being described is a 'standing colour'. Cf. Anscombe, G. 1981: 44-56.
[23] In Chapter 4 we will be dedicated to this theme and the particular vicissitudes of this assertion. Note that it is the case that the intentional use of these verbs does not necessarily imply that one is describing one's 'inner life'. But if one is describing one's 'inner life' then the verb is having its intentional use.
[24] Anscombe, G. 1963: 63.
[25] As we will see, one can grasp this by considering that statements which describe such non-publicly available states of affairs are justified in a certain way.

describing such-and-such are having their secondary application, describing in this particular case sensations.

Let us now consider statements which are framed in the FP which are not thoroughly characterized by the points previously mentioned. Take the statement: "I am walking". As we have seen, this statement plausibly means "*This* body is at the moment making such-and-such movements". Even though this is the case, that statement can be reformulated so as to approximate the status of statements from Group A. Namely by reformulating them into statements which will include the particular use of the 'I' as was established in i). That statement can be reformulated as such: "I think that 'I am walking'". Notice that even though the thought-statement, i.e., "I am walking", describes a state of affairs which can be publicly evaluated as adequate, what is being described in the reformulated statement *as a whole* is the description of a moment in the 'inner life' of the utterer. All statements which are framed in the FP which are not statements of Group A can plausibly be reformulated thus: these statements form Group B.[26]

It is also the case that some statements which describe our 'inner lives' are not in the present indicative. Consider the statement: "I felt pain". Where would one include this statement? It seems as though this statement belongs in Group A because the previous points relative to those statements seem to apply to this one. The full grasp of the importance of the present indicative will be revealed in 1.2., but for now let us reflect upon the meaning of "I felt pain". Even though this statement describes 'something' which occurred in the past, it is plausible to hold that what is meant by this statement is "I remember 'being conscious of such-and-such sensation at a particular time in the past'". Put as such, the reformulated statement is now in the present indicative. But the question can still be made: where would one include this statement? By considering the reformulated statement one realizes that there is a fundamental difference between this statement and statements from Group A. Namely, that what is being described is not a sensation, but that one has a memory with such-and-such content. Notice that even though the content of the memory is 'something' which occurred in one's 'inner life' this does not mean that who uttered that statement is experiencing a sensation. Who uttered that statement is conscious of a memory whose content is such-and-such. I propose that a plausible classification for these statements will be their inclusion in Group B, forming a

[26] In Chapter 2 we will consider this possibility in more detail.

sub-group called B1. The reason for this move is that these particular statements also describe, as do other statements from B, that the utterer is having a thought.[27] Note that one does not only remember that such-and-such happened in one's 'inner life' for one can remember/think such-and-such publicly available states of affairs. In this case, these particular statements are to be included in a sub-group called B2. The difference between statements from B1 and B2 is made by the particular thought-statement: in B1 the thought-statement describes one's 'inner life'; in B2 the thought-statement describes a publicly available state of affairs. We will return to this in 1.2.

As I have alluded to in the beginning of 1.1.1., one can establish a broad distinction between mental reports, being the case that some of them are what I called *full-blown incorrigible statements* (FIS) and *derived incorrigible statements* (DIS). The word "incorrigible" is here placed to capture the particular way these statements are possibly justified which will become clear in 1.1.2. One can fit the distinctions we have been making between statements of Group A and B into these ones. Statements from these groups describe one's 'inner life' deeming them mental reports.[28] Mental reports of Group A are FIS and mental reports from Group B are DIS. As we have seen, the broad difference between statements from A and B lies in the way statements from B have to be reformulated as to clarify the proper first person perspective of the utterer[29]: this is why I used the word "derived".[30] Mental reports which are framed in the TP are not to be called incorrigible as we will grasp by the end of this chapter.

1.1.2 The third person in the present indicative

Let us consider the mental report "He is feeling pain". What is the fundamental non-trivial difference between this statement and "I feel pain"? Both statements describe in a sense our 'inner lives'. The difference lies in the way one would justify these reports. How would one justify "He is feeling pain"? Even though what is being described is in a sense the 'inner life' of such an individual, "he" refers to '*that* body'. Thereof, one can only base one's utterance on the particular behaviour of said individual which is a publicly available state of affairs. In other words, one notices such behaviour and infers that '*that*

[27] Being the case that one can hold that "I am having a memory" means "I think that …"
[28] One sees here the importance of considering the reformulation of statements framed in the FP like "I am walking" into "I think that 'I am walking'". By making this move one emphasizes the 'inner life' of the utterer, which is not explicit in "I am walking". I will consider this in more detail in Chapter 2.
[29] Isn't this already the case with "I felt pain?" In 1.2. I will return to this.
[30] Note that there are statements which are already in this form. Despite this, and for the sake of simplicity, I will also include these in B.

body' is experiencing such-and-such a sensation. This being the case, there is always the possibility that the individual in question is not experiencing such-and-such. Even if his behaviour is consistent with what in most circumstances would lead us to think so. In this sense, if one is pressed to justify the statement "He is feeling pain" one will invoke such-and-such behaviours. Contrast this with a mental report framed in the FP, i.e., an incorrigible statement. If one were pressed to justify the statement "I feel pain", would one appeal to one's bodily behaviours? This does not seem plausible. Furthermore, the only justification that one could give for that statement is that which is occurring in one's 'inner life', leading one to merely repeat the statement in question. That is, one's justification would be circular, i.e., "I feel pain *because* I feel pain". Moreover, only the utterer is in a position to access that which he justifies – the non-publicly available such-and-such. This is why incorrigible statements do not need to be justified: there is no point to it. And in our linguistic interactions we understand this. Note that the point in considering the possible justification of incorrigible statements serves to distinguish in an explicit fashion mental reports framed in the FP and mental reports framed in the TP.

Consider the statement: "He is walking"[31]. Can one reformulate this statement in a similar fashion to the restating of "I am walking"? Can it be reformulated as: "He thinks that 'I am walking'"? One does not have sufficient grounds to say this. Just because '*that* body' is walking does not necessarily imply that we can conclude that such-and-such is conscious of that. One can even hold a further claim: that "He is walking" is not a mental report as "He is feeling pain" is. Even though both statements can be justified by appealing to such-and-such behaviour – which is publicly available – the particular description "He feels pain" leads to a particular understanding of such behaviour, which is not the case with "He is walking". The statement "He is feeling pain" leads one to understand that the individual has an 'inner life' in a way which "He is walking" does not.[32]

If we slightly modify the statement "He is walking" to "He understands that he is walking" we can claim that the same predicament does not hold. Even though both statements possibly describe the same publicly available state of affairs, the latter statement emphasizes the interpretation of said behaviour in the light of that which is

[31] Notice that "walking" is a description from de point of view of who uttered it, which does not mean that that individual is aware that this is the case or that the movement can be described as such. We may be speaking of a non-human animal.
[32] It might be a robot.

possibly taking place in his 'inner life'. It still is the case that "He understands that he is walking" does not necessarily imply that he is conscious of his particular movements. But that one would utter that specific statement - "He understands that he is walking" - reveals that the utterer recognizes a possible 'inner life' in *that* body. Statements like "He *intends* such-and-such", "He *understands* such-and-such", "He *knows* such-and-such", and "He *believes* such-and-such"[33] all lead to the particular understanding which I have previously discussed. By introducing these specific terms, statements which would not be considered mental reports are understood in a different fashion.[34] It is noteworthy that the presence of these terms in a mental report which is framed in the FP does not lead to the same conclusion. Consider the statement "I believe that 'P=NP'". What does this statement mean? A plausible response would be "I think that 'P=NP'".[35] Contrast this reformulated statement with "He believes that 'P=NP'". What is being described in the latter statement is that the individual behaves in a way which possibly implies that he is conscious of such-and-such. One may base one's utterance on his past linguistic or non-linguistic behaviour, or on his present utterance of that statement. By contrasting these two statements one realizes that those special terms previously mentioned are in a sense meant in an 'exteriorized' fashion. Even though one says "I believe such-and-such", what one is possibly saying is that such-and-such is the content of a thought which I am at the moment conscious of. That one *believes* that that is so is determined by the coherence of one's behaviour in accord with the content of that thought. Notice that there need not be coherence between what is thought and what is e.g. believed[36]. For what is emphasized with the presence of those special verbs is the behaviour of such-and-such and not necessarily one's 'inner life'. This is true of all those statements from Group C.

> An intention after all needn't be a thought, for one can intend what one is not thinking of, as when one intends over a whole period to make a certain journey, but in fact seldom

[33] These statements form a group which I will call C: the verbs included in them are special. They may be included in mental reports which are framed in the first person present indicative. But by making this move these statements are to be included in B2, as we will see.
[34] Statements which are cast in the third person present indicative which have as a matter-of-description certain animals.
[35] Particular statements of this kind form a sub-group of B3. Note that the matter-of-description of the thought-statement can be understood as publicly available. But I will choose to separate these so as to emphasize the metaphysical-like character of that which is being described in the thought-statement. The claim that mathematical and logical statements describe states of affairs will not be explored in this work.
[36] One may be said to believe something without having explicitly thought of it before.

> thinks of it, and when one even thinks of it, one's thoughts aren't to the effect that one is going to make that journey.[37]

1.2 Mental reports and 'what' they express. A deflationary account of what constitutes a mental event

An important point made until now was the distinction between publicly available and non-publicly available states of affairs. By doing this I have reiterated in a weak sense the Cartesian distinction between mind and body, between mental events and events understood generally.

> This was not a distinction between human faculties but a distinction between two series of events, such that many events in one series shared many characteristics with many events in the other, while nonetheless differing *toto caelo* because one was an event in extended, and the other in nonextended, substance. It was more like a distinction between two worlds than like a distinction between two sides, or even parts, of a human being.[38]

Once again, the objective of my inquiry is to give an account of mental reports in a way which will lead us to plausibly answer (a). Such answer does not necessarily imply the reification of said events but that certain linguistic behaviours are to be understood in a particular fashion. In the beginning of 1.1.1 it was alluded to that one can differentiate mental reports which are framed in the FP and TP *in the present indicative* by attending to the way they would be justified. By considering this one brings out the plausible claim that "mind" does not mean "consciousness", which is not the case with the Cartesian conception of mind. As was mentioned, if one were to justify mental reports which are framed in the FP one would appeal to that which is present to consciousness, while mental reports which are framed in the TP can be justified by appealing to certain behaviours of '*that* body'. The importance of considering the supposed justification of incorrigible statements reveals that those mental reports express in a sense 'presence to consciousness', which is not the case with non-incorrigible statements like those from Group C. In other words, mental reports which are incorrigible may be said to express that 'something' meaningful is taking place in one's 'inner life' while statements which are non-incorrigible lead to a meaningful interpretation of particular behaviours. If this is the case, then one can plausibly claim that mental reports which express that 'something' meaningful is taking place in one's 'inner life' are the correct statements one should

[37] Anscombe, G. 1963: 59.
[38] Rorty, R. 1980: 51, 52.

interpret as expressing mental events. This is why the Cartesian conception of mind is an overly inclusive linguistic arrangement for what may be claimed to be a plausible answer to (a) is restricted to 'sensations' and 'thoughts' and not open to 'intentions', 'understandings', 'knowings' and 'beliefs'. Note that one may still claim that statements from C are mental reports for they report on some individual's 'inner life'. As such, the set of mental descriptions does not have the same members as the set of statements which express consciousness; rather, the set of statements which express consciousness form a sub-set of mental descriptions.

We have touched on the claim that, if pressed, one would justify mental reports which are stated in the TP by appealing to statements which describe past behaviours of such-and-such. This is the case because these statements emphasize the coherence of one's behaviour in a way which makes plausible that 'something' is taking place in one's 'inner life'. Which, again, does not necessarily imply that one is conscious of such-and-such. This is not the case with incorrigible statements, i.e., mental reports from A and B. If one were pressed to justify those statements one would appeal to what is *presently* taking place in one's 'inner life', which need not be coherent with what happened in one's 'inner life' in the past. This can be seen as what distinguishes statements from A from the thought-statements from statements from B1. The former describe what is presently taking place in one's 'inner life', which is not the case with the thought-statements of mental reports from B1. This is important. Let us concentrate on the thought-statement from a mental report from B1 e.g. "being conscious of such-and-such sensation at a particular time". If one were to justify this statement, what would one appeal to? Can one remember the sensation in question?

> One is very strongly inclined to think that, because "I had a thought *then*" or "I suddenly remembered" refer to particular moments of time, the right thing to look at is something that took place then, as you would look at the mechanism of a clock when the clock struck to see what happened then, for the clock striking is an event in the history of the clock mechanism.[39]

It is plausible that one would not justify that statement – the thought-statement – by appealing to that which is presently occurring in one's 'inner life'. That is, it may be the case that one would appeal to past behaviours – a publicly available such-and-such –

[39] Anscombe, G. 1963: 62.

or the like which do not necessarily imply that one was conscious of such-and-such sensation at that particular time. These considerations may lead us to doubt the straightforward way in which statements from B1 were classified.[40] That is, one may be unsure if the thought-statements in mental reports from B1 describe publicly available or non-publicly available states of affairs which implies that one may be sceptical of what was said in 1.1.1 – that the thought-statement in these mental reports describe one's 'inner life'.

As we have seen, mental reports can be considered as forming three distinct groups. On the one hand, we have mental reports from Groups A and B which are framed in the FP, and on the other mental reports like those from Group C which are framed in the TP. The difference between these statements can be made by considering, for the sake of argument, the way in which they would be justified: statements from Groups A (FIS) and B (DIS) may be said to be incorrigible while statements from C may not. As such, mental reports which are incorrigible imply the expression of consciousness, which may not be the case with statements from C. An important distinction to be made between statements from A and B is the way in which one can separate the content of that which is occurring in one's 'inner life' and that which is occurring in one's 'inner life'. By considering statements from B – as we will see in Chapter 2 – we can emphasize consciousness of the thought taking place or the specific content of that thought, while this distinction is not made in statements from A[41].

This being said, and if these considerations are correct, one can plausibly claim that what one can understand as a mental events is limited to 'sensations' and 'thoughts'.

[40] It can be the case that one's memory is a mental image. In this case, one is *seeing* such-and-such in the mind's eye so to speak. When this is the case, these mental reports are included in A2.
[41] "[F]or the notions of an experience and a content of experience go together." Anscombe, G. 1963: 61.

2. A-users and the rest of us[42]

In the last chapter my main endeavour was to reasonably answer question (a) through a consideration of a particular 'class' of statements which may be called *mental reports*. These statements were of our particular interest because they describe one's 'inner life', the presumable 'arena' where mental events take place. Even though this is the case, it was recognized that mental reports do not describe one's 'inner life' in the same way, being that the particular framing of these statements is fundamental. This difference was dubbed the 'asymmetry' between the first (FP) and third person (TP) in the present indicative which is brought out in the particular consequences of these statements, particularly in the way they possibly are justified. Consider the mental reports "I have a headache" and "He has a headache". While the former mental report is based upon one's 'inner life', the latter is based upon specific behaviours of a particular body which in normal circumstances leads to that understanding. This is the case because one can only be aware in a direct fashion of one's 'inner life', remaining the particular events in the 'inner life' of others not accessible in this fashion. As such, if one is pressed to justify the former mental report one will not appeal to particular behaviours of one's own body - or of others - but to the matter-of-description of the statement in question, i.e., the headache. These mental reports, which are distinguishable from those which are framed in the TP, were called incorrigible for only the utterer in question is in a position to espouse such a statement. Only the utterer has the uniquely privileged access to that matter-of-description, i.e., his 'inner life'.

Now, it was said that one may make a distinction between *full-blown incorrigible statements* (FIS) and *derived incorrigible statements* (DIS). The distinction was essentially based on the fact that not all statements framed in the FP are mental reports nor incorrigible.[43] Despite this being the case, one may slightly alter these statements as to be so. Consider the statement "I have a watch on my wrist". Despite the framing, we may not consider this statement as describing the hypothetical utterer's 'inner life'. Any cognitively apt human being which can understand these words, when suitably placed, is in a position to deem the predicate as adequate or inadequate by attending to the particular object being denoted, which in this case is identical with the object which uttered the statement in question. This is not the case with mental reports like "I have a headache"

[42] Based on *The First Person* (1975).
[43] Note that a statement framed in the FP is a mental report if and only if it is incorrigible.

for even though such-and-such individual uttered the statement, determining the adequacy of the predicate cannot be fulfilled by attending to the utterer's body nor such-and-such behaviours of that body. The same is true of the utterer. It would strike us as particularly odd that one would base the statement "I have a headache" on such-and-such behaviours of one's body in the same fashion as one utters a mental report in the TP. The possibility of correcting this description from the point of view of another individual leads one to reason that the utterer lacks - at least in that moment - the privileged access that we associate with the utterance of incorrigible statements with one's 'inner life'. The point of reformulating statements framed in the FP into incorrigible statements is to emphasis this privileged access. For one to utter the statement "I have a watch on my wrist" one must at least be aware of something, even if one's statement is false or one is not at the moment aware of one's body or of one's surroundings. This awareness or consciousness is consistent with the irreducible point of view of utterances framed in the FP. In other words, even if 'I' in non-mental reports framed in the FP refers to one's body we may grant that one is conscious of this.

In Chapter 1 the reformulation of non-mental reports framed in the FP took the form "I think that 'X'". Putting aside possible cases where this form leads to the understanding that the utterer is unsure of his statement, the verb "to think" makes palpable that some mental event is taking place in one's 'inner life' and that "the language giving a *thought* is having its primary application".[44] This last point is important. That 'X' is having its primary application, i.e., describes a publicly available state of affairs, permits the claim that these reformulated statements are mental reports and at the same time that they contain descriptions of publicly available states of affairs: the latter may be called thought-statements. In this way, all statements framed in the FP can be held as mental reports; and, as such, as incorrigible. The importance of distinguishing the use that 'I' has in these contexts is paramount. It is opportune to clarify an important feature of incorrigible statements: even though incorrigible statements are not contradicted, *in the limit*, by statements which describe publicly available states of affairs ("I am in pain" – "But you don't *look* like it" – "Nevertheless, I am") it is the case that most descriptions of one's 'inner life' are coherent with adequate exteriorized descriptions of particular behaviours of one's body. E.g. in most cases reports of one 'being in pain' are coherent with particular behaviours that are characteristic of one 'being in pain'. It may be because

[44] Anscombe, G. 1963: 62.

of this that the inclination to assume that there is only one use of 'I' - the one which refers to one's body - comes from. By proposing the reformulation of non-mental reports framed in the FP these features are brought out as is straightforwardly the case with statements from A.

In this chapter I will be concentrating on this possible distinction between the two uses of 'I'. In 2.1 I will use two thought-experiments presented by the author herself – the one in 2.1.1 is exactly the same while the one in 2.1.2 is slightly modified – so as to clarify this supposed distinction which I will be asserting. In 2.2 we will be considering the possible referent of the relevant 'I' – that which appears in the context of incorrigible statements – possible difficulties with its postulation and a reaffirmation of Anscombe's surprising thesis: that 'I' does not refer.

2.1 Two uses of "I"

A fundamental point which is the basis of Anscombe's article is the claim that Descartes's reasoning in the *Meditations* stems from the understanding that "*this* I, is not any kind of body."[45] That is, she observes that Descarte's use of 'I' in his argumentation for his dualism directs our attention not to *that* spatiotemporal entity but to a different thing which is what he really is. Now, as was seen, this is coherent with my understanding that there is a use of 'I' which does not refer to '*this* body'. Furthermore, to grasp this use of 'I' we must consider the specific context in which it appears, i.e., in the context of incorrigible statements. This being said, if this is the case then it seems quite plausible that one may distinguish the referent of the name "Descartes" – as being "that figure in the world of his time, that Frenchman, born of such-and-such a stock and christened René"[46] – and the referent of 'I' in the mouth of *that* man.[47] Anscombe basis this distinction on the possibility of one speaking of oneself without knowing that this is the case. One may clearly understand this point by considering the following: some individual Z is reading a diary which, unbeknownst to him, was written by a secret admirer. As is expected, the admirer refers to Z in her diary via the use of his name, i.e., 'Z'. Now, given the precarious situation of Z, he is in a position where he is reading about himself without this being known to him. As was said, this is quite plausible. But it does not seem to be the case that this may happen when he uses 'I'. That is, it does not seem

[45] Anscombe, G. 1975: 21.
[46] Anscombe, G. 1975: 21.
[47] Note that this is not uncontroversial. Cf. Kripke, S. 2011: 311.

to be the case that when individual Z uses 'I' when speaking of himself that he may not be knowledgeable of his self-referring.

Returning to our initial point, if the gist of Descartes' reasoning was that the reference of 'I' is indubitable – "[t]he thinking that thinks this thought"[48]. It is quite plausible to assume that the possibility of not knowing that one is referring to oneself via the use of one's name seems to distinguish the referent of "Descartes" and that of 'I' in the mouth of the latter. In other words, the utterance of one's name in the context of self-descriptions does not necessarily imply that one knows that this is the case while the use of 'I' is, in this sense, sure-fire. That lack of knowledge of one's self-description when one uses 'I' does not seem to be the case can be seen as justifying the supposition that the referent of 'I' is indubitable. Before we get into the possible referent of 'I' in that context, it is quite important to show that the use of 'I' is not stained with this possibility, i.e., of not knowing that one is describing oneself when one uses 'I'. To do this we will consider a thought-experiment which will hopefully elucidate this point.

2.1.1 A-users and I-users

> Imagine a society in which everyone is labelled with two names. One appears on their backs and at the top of their chests, and these names, which the bearers cannot see, are various: "B" to "Z" let us say. The other, "A", is stamped on the inside of their wrists, and is the same for everyone. In making reports on people's actions everyone uses the names on their chests or backs if he can see these names or is used to seeing them (…) Reports on one's own actions, which one gives straight off from observation, are made using the name on the wrist. Such reports are made, not on the basis of observation alone, but also on that of inference and testimony or other information. *B*, for example, derives conclusions expressed by sentences with "A" as subject, from other people's statements using "B" as subject.[49]

Given this presentation, their use of 'A' seems quite similar to our use of 'I'. But note that even though the location of the names on the bodies of these people is marked by an important difference in location, both names are still marked on their bodies. One can see how it is quite plausible, in the context of this society, to assume that both 'A', in the mouth of *B*, and 'B' in the mouth of others refers to *that* body. Just as with I-users, it is quite possible that *B* may refer to himself via 'B' without knowing that this is the case.

[48] Anscombe, G. 1975: 31.
[49] Anscombe, G. 1975: 24.

Or that someone might be referring to *B* by using 'B' without this individual knowing. Being this plausibly the case, it remains to be asked if the same can also happen with the use of 'A' in the mouth of *B*. It was said that because of the specific location of 'B' on *B*'s back that he learns this name in a more or less indirect fashion. In this sense, this strengthens the case being made of the possibility of 'lack of knowledge' with the use of this name. Contrast this with the possibility of some I-user having a nickname without him knowing that that name refers to him. Or even one referring to this I-user using a pronoun like 'he' without the individual knowing that he is being referred to by it. The case with the use of 'I' – and presumably with that of 'A' – is different. On the one hand, one only uses – as presumably is the case with A-users – 'I' to refer to oneself; and not to others, and on the other, one does not need to *look at* that which one is referring to when one uses 'I'. In other words, it seems to be the case that by everyone using 'I' – or 'A' – only to refer to themselves avoids the possibility of such mishaps. Furthermore, the possibility of ignorance with respect to the referent of the term does not seem to be plausible. Again, one may need confirmation from others on the referent of 'he', a nickname or the particular use of one's given name but not that of 'I'. This being said, is this also the case with 'A'?

Here one cannot give a straightforwardly affirmative response. Note that the A-users, as imagined, describe their behaviours by observing that which they are doing. This is a key point. It does not seem to be the case that an I-user needs to observe what he is doing in order to describe said behaviour. This is not to say that one cannot be wrong; but it seems quite plausible that an I-user need not observe his behaviour in order to describe it. We will return to this point further on. Now the A-users do not proceed in this fashion. They need to observe their own behaviours in order to describe them in a similar way as they would proceed to describe the behaviours of others. In this sense, when they use 'A' to refer to themselves, they are referring to *that* body. In other words, for the A-users the only factor which distinguishes the use of 'A' from that of their other names is that it is easier to use 'A' because of its location on their bodies. But the reference of 'A' and of their other name is identical, i.e., *that* body. This is why one can imagine situations like the following: *B* confuses the marking 'A' on *C*'s body for the name of that individual. In this situation, *B* is in a position where he is referring to himself without knowing that he is doing so. In other words, he thinks he is referring to individual *C* in total ignorance of the fact that he is referring to himself via the use of 'A'. This is what distinguishes the

use of ‘A’ and that of ‘I’: the possibility of ignorance of the appropriate referent of the term.

Note that this does not mean that ‘I’ does not refer to ‘*this* body’, as such. Furthermore, it seems quite plausible that there are contexts in which ‘I’ does refer to such-and-such a body. But if this is the case we must account for the presumable sure-fire knowledge of one’s self-referring when one uses ‘I’. We have, therefore, a certain difficulty in reconciling these two uses. For following what was previously said, there is a use of ‘I’ which is identical to that of ‘A’ which implies that it is possible to use ‘I’ without one knowing that one is referring to oneself. It is the purpose of the reformulation of non-incorrigible statements, framed in the FP, into incorrigible statements to make the *rapprochement* of these two uses. To make this point, let us consider another thought-experiment.

2.1.2 The sensory deprivation tank

Let us imagine a situation where a mad scientist puts me in a tank where I am fully anesthetized; I cannot *feel* anything, my body parts are arranged in a way which does not permit any limb to touch the other. Moreover, my sight, hearing, etc. is cut off. In other words, I am not, in this situation, aware of my body or of my surroundings. Despite this, I am conscious. From my perspective, I may not even have a body! Given my unfortunate situation, I want to communicate to the mad scientist – “I can’t move my arms!” I exclaim. Now does the ‘I’ in that statement refer to ‘*this* body’? From the mad scientist’s perspective there seems to be no doubt to the matter: ‘I’ does refer to the body in the sensory deprivation tank (SDT). But is this the case from *my* perspective? As was said, the peculiar situation can motivate such doubts as to the existence of my body for I cannot confirm that my body is *there*. When saying “I can’t move my arms!” in the SDT I may be in a position where I am referring to myself without knowing if I am *there*. And this is something which, presumably, the use of ‘I’ is isolated from: the lack of knowledge relative to that which is being referred to. Note that in the SDT, despite my precarious situation I am still aware of my ‘inner life’. To reinforce this let us reformulate the statement into: “I think that ‘I can’t move my arms!’”, where the ‘I’ in the thought-statement – that which is between the inner quotes – refers to ‘*this* body’. This being said, one can grasp the two uses of ‘I’ here in play. On the one hand, one may still be in a position where one is ignorant of the referent of the ‘I’ in the thought-statement while maintaining the important feature which we started off considering, i.e., that lack of

knowledge relative to the referent of 'I' – in this case, the outer 'I' – in self-descriptions does not seem to be the case. In other words, by reformulating the statement one can grasp the 'I' which functions in a similar fashion as 'A' did in the imagined society and reinforce the 'I' which does not. It is this latter 'I' which is of interest to Anscombe and presumably to Descartes. Once again, I am in a situation where I may not knowledgeable of the existence of my body, nonetheless being able to use the relevant 'I' in a way which I am not ignorant of my self-referring. This being said, if the relevant 'I' is a referring expression, one can plausibly assume that it does not refer to a publicly available state of affairs like the immersion of my body in the SDT. Moreover, that there seems to be no lack of knowledge which accompanies the use of the relevant 'I' seems to indicate that the possible referent of that term is, in a sense, indubitable.

The point about the mad scientist, i.e., that for him there is no difference between the supposed two uses of 'I', is fundamental. In the beginning of this chapter it was said that incorrigible statements, i.e., descriptions of our 'inner lives', are not contradicted, *in the limit*, by descriptions of our bodies or bodily behaviours. That is, descriptions of our 'inner lives' are mostly coherent with exteriorized descriptions of that which is taking place in our 'inner lives'. This is why this distinction is not usually made: given that this coherence is overwhelmingly the case, other individuals need not consider a possible use of 'I' where it does not refer to '*this* body'. This is the reason for saying that for the mad scientist there is no question as to my reference to my body via the use of 'I'. Now from my perspective in the SDT I can clearly grasp the distinction where one 'I' may fail to refer – my body may not be *there* – nonetheless maintaining a use of 'I' which is sure-fire. But why is it sure-fire? In other words, how can I be in this situation and still know that I am referring to myself? A possible answer is that what the relevant 'I' refers to is not a body. What it refers to is "[t]he thinking that thinks this thought"[50]. That is, it seems that I only need to be aware of my 'inner life' in order to guarantee that I know that I am referring to myself by the use of the relevant 'I'. In other words, it seems that, from the SDT, the existence of my body is not necessary for me to know that I am referring to myself via the use of the relevant 'I'. And, it seems, the referent of the relevant 'I' – presumably, what *I really am* – is guaranteed by just thinking. This is why it was said that

[50] Anscombe, G. 1975: 31.

the possible referent of the relevant 'I' is indubitable. Furthermore, if that term does refer it can only refer to an indubitable such-and-such.

These points need more attention if we are to continue. By reformulating non-incorrigible statements framed in the FP into incorrigible statements we can, in a sense, reconcile descriptions of publicly available states of affairs and descriptions of non-publicly available states of affairs, i.e., descriptions of one's 'inner life'. By considering the reformulation of the statement uttered in the SDT one can see this – "I think that 'I can't move my arms!'". The statement as a whole describes my 'inner life' while the thought-statement describes a publicly available state of affairs, as I have been insisting. Now because of my immersion in the SDT I am not in a position to confirm the publicly available state of affairs which is described in the thought-statement: that my body is in such-and-such a situation and that my arms cannot move. Despite my inability to do so I am still aware of such-and-such a mental event, that I thought of such a publicly available such-and-such. Moreover, I am aware that I thought this. Being this the case, it is sure-fire that I am speaking of myself when using the outer 'I' – "*I* think …" – while this may not be said of the 'I' in the thought-statement for, from my perspective, my body may not be *there*. But note that from the perspective of the mad scientist he can confirm that what is being described in the thought-statement is the case, but not that I thought that. This is why the reformulation can only be made from the perspective of the utterer and not from that of the mad scientist, for as we saw in Chapter 1 one may wrongly infer from behaviours of a body to the occurrence of mental events. I believe that it is not only in this situation that one can reformulate statements into incorrigible ones, but it is in these unique situations that the utterer, from his perspective, may grasp this possibility. Note that it is the statement as a whole which is incorrigible and not the description of such-and-such a publicly available state of affairs, which may be attributed a truth-value upon confirmation. Another point which is captured in the reformulation is the one made in 2.1.1, i.e., that I-users do not need to observe their behaviours in order to describe them. This may be said to be the case because one has an immediate awareness of one's 'inner life' and taking into account the mental events of our interest in this moment, i.e., thoughts, one may say that these are in most circumstances about publicly available states of affairs. As Anscombe says:

> When one reads Locke, one wants to protest: "The mind is not employed about ideas, but about things – unless ideas are what we happen to be thinking about."[51]

In this sense, one may say that when one describes one's body or behaviours of that body straight off it is because one is immediately aware of such-and-such a mental event which is about a particular publicly available circumstance. I believe that this is captured in the reformulation of statements framed in the FP, which are not incorrigible, in that the awareness of the thought is explicit and so is that which the thought is about.

2.2 The Cartesian ego

Following what was said in 2.1 one may say: i) when one uses 'I' it seems to be the case that it is sure-fire that one is referring to oneself; ii) by contrasting A-users and I-users one can plausibly assert that if 'I' referred to '*this* body' then I-users would be like A-users, where the latter may be in a situation where they refer to themselves via 'A' without knowing this, as may be the case with one's given name; iii) by considering the SDT we strived to distinguish the supposed two uses of 'I' by reflecting on the possibility of using 'I' to refer to '*this* body' without knowing if *that* body is there. While still maintaining a use of 'I' that is sure-fire as to one's self-referring – it is this latter 'I' which distinguishes A-users from I-users.

This being said, one can understand that which was meant in Chapter 1 as the common feature of statements from A and B: that 'I' *in this context* does not refer to '*this* body'. Now if this 'I' is a term whose function is to refer, it must refer to an indubitable such-and-such, "[t]he thinking that thinks this thought"[52].In other words, being plausibly the case that one may reformulate utterances so as to capture the first person perspective of the utterer – the awareness of his 'inner life' – we may say that the possible referent of the relevant 'I' accompanies every utterance and every thought of such-and-such an utterer. Furthermore, whatever the possible referent is one may say that it is non-publicly available, i.e., only the utterer may access it, if this is a possibility. Remember what was said in the SDT: only by considering those special circumstances can one grasp the relevant use of 'I' in an explicit fashion. Moreover, this use is made explicit in the specific context of descriptions of our 'inner lives'. This being said, it is quite plausible to say that if that 'I' does refer then its referent is to be found in our 'inner lives', i.e., it is non-

[51] Anscombe, G. 1965: 5.
[52] Anscombe, G. 1975: 31.

publicly available. Just as with mental events, which are non-publicly available and therefore accessible in an immediate fashion, we are to suppose that the referent of the relevant 'I' is also. Similar considerations are what led philosophers such as Hume into quarrelsome thoughts about this matter. Anscombe writes:

> So some racked their brains over what this invisible subject and the 'thinking of *it*' could be; others thought there was no such thing, there were just all the objects, and hence that "I", rather, was the name of the whole collection of perceptions. But that hardly fitted its grammar, and anyway – a problem which utterly stumped Hume – by what was *I* made into a unity? (…) Yet others denied that the self was invisible, and claimed that there is a unique feeling of oneself which is indiscernible but very, very important, especially in psychology, in clinical psychology, and psychiatry.[53]

Anscombe concludes that these questions as to that which the referent of the relevant 'I' is are quite innocuous and redirects her attention to that which originates all these problems: the assumption that the relevant 'I' is a term whose function is to refer at all. And this is not a problem. That is, for the author one may explain all that has been said about the relevant 'I' without postulating such an object. When one uses 'I' it is the case that one cannot use this without knowing that which one is referring to because one is not referring to anything. As Anscombe says:

> With names, or denoting expressions (in Russell's sense) there are two things to grasp: the kind of use, and what to apply them to from time to time. With "I" there is only the use.[54]

In other words, exploring the relevant 'I' means exploring the context in which it appears without assuming that this word refers. Once again, the reasoning is that if the relevant 'I' refers it can only refer to some kind of CE - "[t]he thinking that thinks this thought"[55] – and being the case that the possible reference gives rise to insurmountable problems, one may question the assumed function of the relevant 'I' as a referring expression. This may be a valid way of reasoning. I propose that one can plausibly negate that there is a reference of the relevant 'I' in another way.

[53] Anscombe, G. 1975: 32.
[54] Anscombe, G. 1975: 32.
[55] Anscombe, G. 1975: 31.

2.2.1 The paradox

Let us imagine again my immersion in the SDT and all that this implies, i.e., I cannot *feel* anything but I am aware of my thoughts. In this sense, the latter are the only non-publicly available states of affairs I am aware of. I begin to try to investigate the referent of the relevant 'I' which, as I have plausibly conceded, is indubitable and non-publicly available, i.e., *I* am the only one who can access it. Moreover, it must be said that whatever it is, it is that which is presented with these thoughts: my body may not be there, but there is a something which is aware or presented with these thoughts. As such, we may characterize the CE as: *that which is presented with all non-publicly available states of affairs (CE1)*, which in this case are only thoughts. Given this, one may presume that the CE is presented to itself, for whatever it is, it is also non-publicly available.

In what way is the CE presented to itself? As was said, one is only aware of thoughts. Therefore, if the CE is presented to itself then it is presented to itself as a thought. In other words, it is presented to itself as a mental event. This is problematic. Granting that it is presented to itself in this way, it is quite difficult to plausibly assert that any thought can be characterized as the CE was. Is it plausible to say that a mental event, i.e., a thought, can be presented to itself? We would rather say that a thought, whatever it *is*, cannot be self-aware. Note that 'being self-aware' and 'being presented to itself' can be understood in a similar fashion. That is, it seems plausible to say that when one is aware of such-and-such one is presented with such-and-such in a certain way. E.g. one is aware of one's 'inner life' in an immediate fashion; or, as one may say, one is presented with one's 'inner life' in an immediate fashion. Being this plausibly the case, it seems that one may not admit that the postulated CE *qua* thought can be characterized in this way. The specific circumstances of the SDT solely permit one to be aware of thoughts, and not sensations, which reduces the possibility of the possible referent of the relevant 'I' being presented to itself in another way. Supposing that the CE can be presented to itself as a thought leads one into a position where one must characterize a thought as (CE1), which is problematic in that we will not grant that a thought can be characterized in this way. Therefore, we arrive at a contradiction: the CE *qua* thought must be characterized as in (CE1) and at the same time it is reasonably the case that a thought cannot be characterized in that fashion, i.e., as being presented to itself. Furthermore, given my specific situation, there is no other way in which the CE can be presented to

itself – remember that I am not aware of publicly available states of affairs nor of any kind of sensation for I am anaesthetized.

This being said, it seems to be the case that the CE cannot be presented to itself. Note that, as we considered in Chapter 1, the 'I' in descriptions of sensations of A1 and A2 is the relevant 'I' which we are investigating. Therefore, our reasoning could also be made by considering the matter-of-description of these statements, which is also non-publicly available. Despite this, the SDT brings out the difference of the two uses of 'I' in more explicit fashion because we are considering the reformulation of non-incorrigible statements framed in the FP into incorrigible statements, which is the proper context of the relevant 'I'. Now even though one may not grant that the postulated CE can be presented to itself, one need not get rid of such a CE yet. Even though it may not be possible to be aware of it, one may still suppose it. But by doing this we change our understanding of it. One may still grant that it is non-publicly available – such questions as "*Where* is it?" still do not apply – and that it is indubitable. This latter point will not be made by saying that it is immediately aware of itself, but that one may presume it on the basis that there must be a 'something' which is aware of such non-publicly available states of affairs. That is, if I am thinking there must be that which thinks that thought, which nonetheless cannot be presented to itself. Remember that in the SDT the existence of my body can be doubted. Following this, one may characterize the possible referent of the relevant 'I' as: *that which is presented with all non-publicly available states of affairs which are not presented to themselves (CE2)*, which in this case are only thoughts. In this way we avoid falling into the characterization given in (CE1) and at the same time still maintain this object as a possible referent for that term. Furthermore we emphasize, through (CE2), that non-publicly available states of affairs like thoughts are not presented with themselves which was what led us into the problem with (CE1).

Now this also problematic. Moreover, it seems that we have arrived at a paradox. If all that which was previously said is correct, then we may doubt that such an object exists. Given (CE2) we must concede that the CE is presented to itself. As we have seen, one plausibly negated the possibility of the referent of the relevant 'I' as being presented to itself for the only way in which it could be presented with itself was *qua* a thought. Given that a thought cannot be characterized in this fashion, we concluded that the CE cannot also be characterized in this fashion, being that it was the only way in which it could. But if we do this we must infer that it does. That is, that the CE is presented with

itself because it is a non-publicly available such-and-such which is not presented with itself. Furthermore, if it is a non-publicly available such-and-such which is presented with itself then it cannot be presented with itself.

If it is the case that the postulation of such a CE is followed by the paradox just described then one may plausibly hold that the postulation of such an object may be doubted. In other words, given that the postulation of the possible referent of the relevant 'I' leads us into an absurd conclusion it is plausibly the case that one may be sceptical of postulating it. An important feature of this CE – one may say in Descartes' view, a fundamental aspect – is that of it being indubitable. Given that one may plausibly try to avoid such a postulation because of its consequences, entirely defeats its purpose as the object which is referred to by the 'I' whose use leaves no doubts as to that which is being referred to. This being said, I believe that one can double down on Anscombe's conclusion by considering what was previously presented, i.e., that the paradox[56] is symptomatic of there plausibly being no referent for the relevant 'I'.

2.2.2 Consideration of the problem of the absence of reference

One may hold that, therefore, there is one 'I' which does refer to '*this* body' and an 'I' which does not refer at all. And one may consider these by regarding the proper context in which they appear: the former appears in the context of descriptions of publicly available states of affairs while the latter in the context of descriptions of our 'inner lives', i.e., non-publicly available states of affairs. I believe that such a distinction can be seen as resolving problems which stem from Anscombe's view as such.

> A common criticism of Anscombe's position is that if 'I' is not a referring expression, why should we be confident in the inference pattern from, say, 'I live in North Carolina' to 'Someone lives in North Carolina' (in other words, existential generalization), or in fact that any inference pattern where 'I' is treated as if it refers is valid. Indeed, such an objection is only a technical expression of one's natural reaction that Anscombe's thesis is in and of itself incredible, difficult to understand at all.[57]

I do partially agree with Kripke in that it is quite explicitly the case that Anscombe is difficult to understand. Nonetheless, I believe that one may resolve this almost common sense objection. It is clear that the statement "I live in North Carolina" describes a

[56] Again, if that 'I' does refer it seems to be the case that it could only refer to such an object as the postulated CE.
[57] Kripke, S. 2011: 312.

publicly available state of affairs: *this* body's geographical location in North America. As such, the inference to "Someone lives in North Carolina" seems unobjectionable. But one must note that this utterance had to be made by *someone*. It might be the case that Kripke was not in North Carolina when he made that statement which does not diminish the possibility of such an inference pattern, i.e., the statement may be false nonetheless remaining the inference valid. This being said, given that that statement is framed in the FP one may reformulate it into "I think that 'I live in North Carolina'". The 'I' in the thought-statement refers to '*this* body' because the specific context is that of a description of some publicly available such-and-such, which may possibly be given a truth-value. The reformulated statement as a whole does not describe a such-and-such of that availability but the 'inner life' of that which made that statement. In this context, however, the 'I' does not refer to '*this* body' because one may plausibly hold that it does not refer at all. Hopefully, the reformulation resolves the initial problem in that the inference is not being made from the reformulated statement as a whole but from the thought-statement which, again, describes a publicly available state of affairs. One can, therefore, reconcile Anscombe's position with that of the possibility of such inference pattern by noting the distinct context in which the two uses of 'I' appear. Given that the relevant 'I' in that context does not refer, and that 'what' one is describing is that such-and-such a thought is taking place, is it the case that one may infer anything from that statement as such? Note that I am not saying that it is not a body which thinks that thought – it must be - but that it seems that a specific description of this kind is not propitious for valid inferences. In Chapter 3 we will return to this.

3. On *Substance*[58]

When the so-called *full-blown incorrigible statements* (FIS) were discussed in Chapter 1 they were plausibly posited into two distinct sub-groups: A1 and A2. The distinction between the statements of these sub-groups was asserted as a distinction between different characteristics of the specific verbs which we encounter in them. The paradigmatic examples of statements of these sub-groups were "I feel pain" and "I see red" - being that the proper matter-of-description is the 'inner life' of the utterer. Putting aside the particular categorization put forth, it can be plausibly held that the matter-of-description of these statements may not universally be recognized as obvious. And this may be held as a consequence of the particular characteristics of the verbs in one of these sub-groups as will be explored.

Moreover, in this chapter we will be reflecting on the perennial metaphysical theme of substance so as to prepare the terrane for our final chapter in which the plausibility of holding that ambiguities with respect to the matter-of-description of certain statements stems from peculiar characteristics of some verbs. Before we get into our principal theme it is fundamental that we shed light on the particular interest in statements from one of these sub-groups in connection with our reflections on the notion of substance.

Let us concentrate on the *prima facie* understanding of a statement like "I have a headache". It is rather straightforward that a statement of this ilk describes one's 'inner life' in a way which is quite unambiguous. There seems to be no question as to our understanding of "headache" as a word introduced to describe such-and-such sensations on the part of the utterer. In other words, "headache" is not a word which is used to describe a particular publicly available state of affairs in the context of mental reports framed in the first person. Contrast this with the possible *prima facie* understanding of a statement such as "I see red". It is plausibly the case that abstracting from the particular context in which it was uttered one may not be able to discern if the utterer is describing his 'inner life' or a publicly available state of affairs. It may be the case that the utterer merely *sees* some sort of after-image or the like. Now this is quite uncommon. One may be quite confident in asserting that in the overwhelming amount of cases in which one uses such verbs as "to see" or "to hear" one is describing such-and-such publicly available

[58] Based on *Substance* (1964).

X or at least such-and-such sensible property *of* X. Even though this is the case, it is reasonable to admit that there are cases where one uses these verbs in contexts where there is no – wholly or partially - publicly available matter which is being described. The philosophical significance of these cases will be considered in the subsequent chapter. Of interest in this chapter will be to further our understanding of correct uses of these statements so as to describe publicly available matters-of-description. Moreover, the understanding of different kinds of publicly available matters-of-description will be broadened. To do this, I will attend to the sub-themes of the recognition of spatiotemporal entities[59] and the use of certain predicates to do so.

3.1. The notion of substance and substantial kinds

At the end of her article, Anscombe makes an important distinction when discussing the notion of 'idea' in Locke's work. She writes:

> And it seems as though in this conception the difference between the *objective and the subjective appearance*[60]– between the highlight, or colour changed by the light it is seen in, on the one hand, and the drug-induced or astigmatic colours and perspectives, on the other – is quite unimportant.[61]

The distinction being made between objective and subjective appearances is noteworthy inasmuch as concerns the objective appearances. One does not usually use these words in simultaneity for our common understanding of talk of appearances relates to some understanding of subjectivity[62] - of e.g. *incorrect descriptions of what is there*. In this sense, saying "subjective appearances" is redundant. Now to speak of objectivity in this context is to make a point about the way we correctly describe spatiotemporal entities, or their properties, in a way which emphasizes that *someone* is making such-and-such a description of X. In other words, and using the terminology put forth in my work, one may speak of publicly available appearances without there being any contradiction of terms. But what is the purpose of speaking in this fashion? It seems quite reasonable to assert that if one correctly describes such-and-such empirical X one is not describing how X appears but how X is. To clarify this point let us consider the specific predicates one uses so as to describe particular spatiotemporal entities.

---

[59] Being understood in a more or less extended sense.
[60] My emphasis.
[61] Anscombe, G. 1964: 43.
[62] For a detailed investigation of the senses of "subjective". Cf. Anscombe, G. 1976: 44-56.

3.1.1 Substances and their predicates

The importance of reflecting on these predicates is to clarify the different ways in which descriptions of sensible properties of spatiotemporal entities presuppose a certain conception of substance. In a rather straightforward way one will admit that paradigmatic examples of sensible properties are "colour, shape, being liquid, being hot, yielding no sound when rapped"[63], etc. Even though one may group these under that title, there seems to be notable differences between them inasmuch as concerns descriptions of them. Being that our specific interest in this subject has to do with descriptions, we will pivot our attention to the particular predicates we use in statements which describe such sensible properties and their relation to a certain understanding of a conception of substance. Note that it has been assumed from the get-go – a point made in Chapter 1 – that vicissitudes of language are impactful on our understanding of certain philosophical themes. It will not be the objective of this work to delve into the merits of this position. Nonetheless, this will be treated in a more explicit fashion in Chapter 4 as a consequence of Anscombe's thoughts in her article *The Intentionality of Sensation* (1965) which is the theoretical basis of that chapter.

In her article – *Substance* - Anscombe divides these predicates into three distinct groups: i) substantial predicates; ii) substance-involving predicates; and iii) neither substantial nor substance-involving predicates. We will look at these predicates in more detail and try to get to the reasoning behind the specific categorization.

3.1.1.1 Substantial predicates

The author characterizes these predicates as such: "They tell you what kind or kinds of substance *that lump of stuff* is."[64] One can learn two things from this characterization. On the one hand, these predicates categorize such spatiotemporal entities into kinds of substances[65]; and, on the other, that these predicates presuppose a certain conception of substance as a *lump of stuff*. It is paramount to note that one may understand these predicates as implicit descriptions of sensible properties of some X. This implies that the categorization of X has to do with some kind or other of defining sensible properties of such X. In other words, not all descriptions of sensible properties of X will

[63] Anscombe, G. 1964: 39.
[64] Anscombe, G. 1964: 40.
[65] The author gives as an example the predicate "alive". I do not understand her reasoning.

have the same weight in the categorization; and such categorization into a substantial kind can be held as an implicit grouping of such defining properties. Consider the example "X is gold". It is straightforward that such a predicate – "is gold" – categorizes X into what has been called a substantial kind. Now this particular X has *n* properties which one is sensibly acquainted with, which does not mean that *all* those sensible properties of the particular X determine the categorization which was made. In this sense, "is gold" is an implicit grouping of descriptions of such sensible properties as e.g. "is yellow-looking", "melts at 1064.18 ºC", "is prone to electrical conductivity", etc., in an *approximate* way. This is important. It is the case that substantial kinds such as e.g. gold are thoroughly specified through the achievements of chemistry whereby to firmly determine that that particular X is gold one will investigate, at a molecular level, the particular constitution of that X. As being composed of a relevant amount of *Au* atoms, for example. In a sense, the only description which is relevant to the categorization of X is its particular chemical structure, i.e., "is gold" can be understood as an implicit description of the chemical constitution of such X. Despite this being the case, one can put aside this rigorous classification, for pragmatic purposes, and rely on the so-called approximate categorization via the consideration of those descriptions of sensible properties previously mentioned.

Following what was said thus far, I propose that one may understand substantial predicates in a *pragmatic* sense – where the substantial predicate implicitly describes *relevant* properties that some individual is more or less immediately acquainted with – and in a *determinate* sense – where the substantial predicate implicitly describes the underlying structure of X which is a sufficient condition upon which one categorizes X into the proper substantial kind. Note that the clarity of such a distinction is determined by the particular spatiotemporal entity one is considering. The relevance of such a distinction is to bring forth the inherent possibility of error in categorizing X into a specific substantial kind. Let us consider if the implicit descriptions, in the two sense considered, may be understood as themselves implying the specific substantial predicate. The pragmatic sense first.

Returning to the previous examples, is it the case that "is yellow-looking", "melts at 1064.18 ºC", "is prone to electrical conductivity", etc., imply the substantial predicate "is gold"? Even though it is reasonable to assert that some list of these descriptions constitutes a necessary condition for the substantial predicate, it is a stretch to hold that

that list is a sufficient condition for the substantial predicate "is gold". And this is the case because it is always possible that X can be correctly described by the list without X being correctly categorized into such-and-such a substantial kind. In other words, and to differing degrees depending on the particular spatiotemporal entity, error is always possible. Now it seems to be the case that the same may not be said of the determinate sense. That is, it is reasonable to hold that the description of the chemical structure of e.g. gold implies the substantial predicate "is gold". Confirming the truth of the particular description being considered, there is no doubt as to that X being e.g. gold. In other words, the description of the chemical structure of X is a sufficient condition for the adequate categorization of X into the proper substantial kind. For the sake of clarity, one may put the distinction as such:

i) Pragmatic sense: $SP \rightarrow L$

ii) Determinate sense: $SP \leftrightarrow DUS$[66]

Being this the case, it is reasonable to assert that DUS may also be held as a substantial predicate in itself for it satisfies the characterization given by the author in a way which L does not. In principle there may be spatiotemporal entities which can be described with the same L and, nonetheless, be in fact members of different substantial kinds. Once again, just because X is described by some L does not necessarily imply that the substantial predicate we are inclined to use correctly categorizes X into such-and-such a substantial kind. Note that one must not confuse the underlying structure of X with what may called a *bare particular*:

> [W]hich underlies the appearances and is the subject of predication but just for that reason can't *in itself* be characterized by any predicates.[67]

The postulation of such a bare particular is to an extent a confusion as to the meaning of the question "What is X *in itself*?", i.e., "[W]hat is the individual thing *qua* individual, in its individuality?"[68] So, how do we understand "X *qua* X"? Are we to take this as a statement with no predicate – "X *qua* X" as a subject-term – or as a statement whose subject-term is "X" and whose predicate is "*qua* X"? If we go for the former then the implied answer to the question "What is X in itself?" is some kind of bare particular

[66] SP= Substantial Predicate; L= List of descriptions of sensible properties which one is more or less immediately acquainted with; DUS= Description of the underlying structure of X.
[67] Anscombe, G. 1964: 37.
[68] Anscombe, G. 1964: 37.

as was previously stated; if we go for the latter, then we must investigate X as to uncover "[w]hat is always and necessarily true of it."[69] It is the latter which is meant by the underlying structure of X. To return to the previous point, it may be the case that some or all the descriptions which are grouped in L are not always true of X. Which subsequently may not be a firm basis upon which one categorizes X into such-and-such a substantial kind via a particular substantial predicate. Now the problem with accepting the former route – of postulating a bare particular – is, I believe, that this trivializes to a great extent the results of empirical investigations of X because it supposes that what X *is* remains over and above true descriptions of that X. This kind of reasoning is the same which catalysed criticism of Anscombe's theory of action, particularly the correct understanding of the phrase "under a description".

> I have on occasion stared dumbly when asked: "If one action can have many descriptions, what is *the* action, which has all these descriptions?" The question seemed to be supposed to mean something, but I could not get hold of it.[70]

The action, as *the* X, is the same such-and-such which is correctly described in various ways. Note that this does not mean that Leibniz's Law is rejected, i.e., that because *this* X can be correctly described in various ways in some sense implies that it is not the same X which is being correctly described in all those statements. As Anscombe puts it:

> [W]hat would we say of a theory which grants that a certain man, Dickens wrote *David Copperfield*, and only this Dickens wrote *Bleak House* – but does *not* grant that "The author of *David Copperfield*" describes the same man as "The author of *Bleak House*"?[71]

The point is that even though it is the same X which is being described, only under a specific description can X be categorized into a particular substantial kind e.g. the substantial predicate describes what X is *in itself*. Any other understanding of "X *qua* X" or "X *in itself*" "supposes a continued identity independent of what is true of the object"[72] which amounts to saying that one cannot describe what X really *is*. If "X *qua* X" is treated as a subject-term then it refers, if it refers, to some object without sensible properties - which runs contrary to the feats of the rigorous sciences.

---

[69] Anscombe, G. 1964: 38.
[70] Anscombe, G. 1979: 209.
[71] Anscombe, G. 1979: 210.
[72] Anscombe, G. 1964: 38.

3.1.1.2 Substance-involving predicates

We have still to touch upon in an explicit fashion the second point made in the characterization of substantial predicates proposed by the author, i.e., that a certain conception of substance is presupposed when one uses such predicates. Before we get into this, we will expound on substance-involving predicates. Anscombe characterizes these predicates in the subsequent way: "Something must be *that lump of stuff* in order to be so much as a candidate for having malleability."[73] The paradigmatic example of a substance-involving predicate, as presented by the author, is "is malleable". Note that by the way the author puts the process of characterizing X with such a predicate of this nature is not to categorize X into such-and-such a substantial kind, as with the predicates previously considered. Nonetheless, these predicates do reduce the range of possibilities. Considering the example being given – "is malleable" – one can see that not all instances of substantial kinds can be described with this particular predicate. Being this the case, if X is correctly described by that predicate we may conclude that e.g. X is not water *in the current state* it is being investigated. One must pay attention to this last point because e.g. water can be described as malleable when in its solid state. And it may also be the case that certain substance-involving predicates do not adequately describe all instances of a specific substantial kind. E.g. "is smooth" may not be applicable to all kinds of fish.

One can see, through these characterizations, that substance-involving predicates may reduce our scope of possibilities relative to the categorization of X without determining that X as being an instance of such-and-such a substantial kind. Returning to the initial point, both substantial predicates - in the two senses mentioned - and substance-involving predicates presuppose the conception of X as a physical object. That is, the use of such predicates implies that the X being described is composed of some sort of *stuff* which is publicly available for evaluation. Note that this implies that one can be wrong in one's description. Nonetheless, for one to describe X in such a way presupposes a certain conception of that X. Now, it is the case that there are publicly available matters-of-description which, when described, do not imply this sort of conception. Let us take as examples rainbows and mirages. These are common phenomena which are publicly available and are not to be comparable to hallucinations and other kinds of 'inner' occurrences. Are "is a rainbow" and "is a mirage" to be counted as substantial predicates?

[73] Anscombe, G. 1964: 40.

It is the case that these phenomena can be explained in a rigorous way, being a conjunction of certain environmental conditions and particular bodily determinations of the observer. Nonetheless, it is a stretch to conclude that the phenomena being described by "is a rainbow" and "is a mirage" are instances of substantial kinds. If this was the case one could describe them by the use of substance-involving predicates. At this point one must avoid certain confusions. In 3.1.1.1 a distinction was made between two ways one can understand substantial predicates: in a pragmatic sense and in a determinate sense. By using a substantial predicate in the former sense we are grouping a list of descriptions of sensible properties that we are more or less immediately acquainted with. But note that this does not mean that descriptions of these properties are to be taken, *a priori*, as substance-involving predicates. Let us take a look at the examples given in 3.1.1.1.: "is yellow-looking", "melts at 1064.18 ºC", "is prone to electrical conductivity", etc. It is the case that we have two examples of substance-involving predicates: "melts at 1064.18 ºC" and "is prone to electrical conductivity". These predicates do necessarily imply that the X being described has a physical existence, i.e., that the X is composed of a kind of stuff. The description "is yellow-looking" does not necessarily imply this. It may be the case that one is describing a publicly available phenomena which does not have a physical existence - as is the case with rainbows and mirages - or even that one may be merely describing one's 'inner life' and there is no X which is *there*. The point is that descriptions of such properties as e.g. colours are not to be considered as substance-involving for they do not necessarily imply that the particular X being considered is *a lump of stuff*, which does not mean that spatiotemporal entities cannot be described by the use of these predicates. In other words, while substantial predicates and substance-involving predicates necessarily presuppose the conception of X as being composed of some kind of stuff, these predicates which are neither substantial nor substance-involving do not. For the sake of clarity the point will be made as such:

iii) $(SP \vee SIP) \rightarrow CLS$;

iv) $NSP \rightarrow (CLS \vee^{74} \neg CLS)$ [75]

We have already touched upon fundamental lines of reasoning. It is the case that the particular L which is implied by substantial predicates in the pragmatic sense is

[74] Exclusive disjunction.
[75] SIP: substance-involving predicate; CLS: conception of X as a lump of stuff; NSP: neither substantial nor substance-involving predicate.

composed of either substance-involving predicates or neither substantial nor substance-involving predicates. Again, the descriptions which are implied by substantial predicates in the determinant sense are themselves substantial predicates. Nevertheless, both these understandings of substantial predicates presuppose the conception of the X in consideration as a physical object. This may also be said of substance-involving predicates. This is noteworthy because the predicates previously mentioned – substance-involving predicates - necessarily imply that X is not only publicly available, but that it is a particular kind of publicly available object: a physical entity. This is the reason for the non-adequacy of these predicates in describing such publicly available phenomena as rainbows or mirages. E.g.:

> [I]f I asked you to see if the rainbow would melt at 44ºC, this would imply a conception of a rainbow as composed of stuff, so that a sample of it could be brought away and subjected to tests.[76]

Even though this is the case, these kinds of phenomena are publicly available and descriptions of these can be incorrect. Notice the difference between these and e.g. hallucinations which are non-publicly available. Predicates which do not fit within these two kinds, i.e., substantial and substance-involving predicates, have a wider range of use for they do not presuppose a specific conception of the X being considered. Furthermore, they are also used in descriptions of one's 'inner life'.

3.1.1.3 Secondary-quality words

The distinction between publicly available states of affairs and non-publicly available states of affairs is of great importance for the notion of truth. I see that it is strictly necessary that for a description of X to be true that X must be publicly available. I believe that it is quite absurd to assert that the description of such-and-such is only true *for me*, something which people commonly assert: "This is *my* truth" and other nonsense of the like. Note that the matter-of-description has to be publicly accessible in principle: just because some particular individual is the first to see a particular fallen tree or the first to prove Fermat's last theorem does not mean that those matters-of-description[77] were in principle only accessible to that individual. This is totally unlike one's 'inner life' which is a matter-of-description only accessible to a particular individual which, when

[76] Anscombe, G. 1964: 40.
[77] That mathematics, particularly pure mathematics, describes states of affairs is a contentious subject which will not be discussed.

described, has implications for the applicability of the concept of truth. It is this point which fleshes out the reasoning behind calling certain statements incorrigible: that because the matter-of-description is non-publicly available, one may say that these statements are neither true nor false. To say that a certain description of my 'inner life' is true is to say that it is true *for me*, for only I can, in principle, access it. The process of presenting mathematical or logical proofs, or that of describing fundamental phenomena of the physical world, rests upon the assumption that the particular matters-of-description are publicly available which casts doubt, I believe, upon the possibility of a science of *first person* mental phenomena.

Note that this does not imply a particular ontological position. As was said, both *this* chair and *that* rainbow are publicly available, remaining the 'ontological step' to be made. What is the interest in this for our current endeavour? The interest resides in the applicability of neither substantial nor substance-involving predicates to different kinds of publicly available states of affairs. The sensible properties being described by those predicates are what was called in modern philosophy "secondary qualities" such as colour and sound – the predicates used to describe these will be called secondary-quality words from now on.

> To receive impressions of secondary qualities, you merely have to *let the appropriate sense-organ be affected*[78]; that is why one can always imagine that the quality is a *mere* sense content.[79]

It is the case that the sensible properties which are described by the use of substance-involving predicates also affect the appropriate sense-organs. The difference stems from the range of matters-of-description which can be described through them. Note that one can use secondary-quality words to describe one's 'inner life' which does not mean that the appropriate sense-organ is affected: e.g. one may be afflicted with the continued repetition of a popular song in one's head, where one may say "I hear that song in my head". Nonetheless, this does not mean that one's ears are receiving such-and-such oscillations of particles which we commonly call sound. Putting these cases aside for now, one is to understand "letting the appropriate sense-organ be afflicted" as marking the 'neutrality' in one's specific conception of the publicly available X being considered. E.g. the description of the colour of X does not necessarily imply that that X is a physical

[78] My emphasis.
[79] Anscombe, G. 1964: 39.

entity, as with the case of mirages. That this is the case has peculiar implications for our understanding of substantial predicates, particularly in the pragmatic sense. It was emphasized that the L which is implied by a predicate of this sort groups both substance-involving predicates and secondary-quality words. Now the fact that the latter predicates do not necessarily imply a particular conception of the publicly available X being described is quite important for the understanding of some uses of substantial predicates. We will explore this point and the relation with the use of secondary-quality words to describe one's 'inner life'.

3.2 Objective and subject appearances

We started this chapter off by reflecting on the distinction, presented by the author, between objective and subjective appearances. This distinction can be made by the terminology used throughout this work, i.e., as the distinction between publicly available matters-of-description and non-publicly available matters-of-description. But it remains to be explained the use of the word "appearance" in connexion with both these matters-of-description. Anscombe characterizes an appearance as "a way things strike the senses"[80]. Note that the author also characterized the properties which are described by secondary-quality words in the same fashion. But why is this? Suppose that one is presented with an X which one is inclined to describe as a human being. One proceeds to use the substantial predicate "is a human being" basing one's description on the way X looks. Now just because it looks like a human being does not necessarily imply that it is, just as the use of substance-involving predicates does not necessarily imply a particular categorization of that X into a specific substantial kind. Various instances of substantial kinds may be described by the same substance-involving predicate. But one is basing the description "is a human being" on the way X *looks* which has to do with the way X is visually presented, i.e., "the secondary qualities[81], together with their qualifications of size, shape and mutual arrangement."[82] It is the case that human beings all have a common shape and a more or less determined size – abstracting from particular variations – particular skin complexions and, if dressed, particular clothing with their particular colours. So when one bases one's description – "is a human being" – on the way X looks, one is basing one's description on the criterion previously mentioned. Again, this does

[80] Anscombe, G. 1964: 40.
[81] In this case, the colours.
[82] Anscombe, G. 1964: 39.

not mean that X *is* a human being: it might be a very convincing robot or a hologram. Pushing this point further, given the bases of one's use of that particular substantial predicate, one cannot discern merely by the way X immediately looks if X is a non-publicly available state of affairs – thereby being no X *there* - or a publicly available state of affairs. Moreover, even if one knew that X was a publicly available state of affairs, the way X looks is still neutral with respect to the particular conception of X as either a physical object or not. Note that if one were to base one's substantial predicate on properties which are described by substance-involving predicates one could still be wrong, but the X would neither be a non-publicly available state of affairs nor a non-physical object. It is important to clarify that if the X was a non-publicly available state of affairs – a mental image – and one based one's substantial predicate on what one *saw*, one will not conclude that that description was false. It is the case that that individual did *see* a mental image which one discerned as fit to be described by a particular substantial predicate. One may discover the particular availability of that matter-of-description without having to correct the description of what one *saw*. As was said in 3.1.1.3., that one *saw* a mental image does not mean that the proper sense-organ was affected by that mental image. Once again, because the matter-of-description is only available to the particular individual one may refrain from attributing a truth-value to the statement, i.e., it is incorrigible.

The point of talk of appearances has to do specifically with secondary-quality words. Suppose that the X being described by "is a human being" is in fact a convincing robot. Just because X is not a human being does not mean that the way it appeared to such-and-such individual is not a publicly available way of appearing. Moreover, even if the substantial predicate did correctly describe X, X still appeared to be an instance of a particular substantial kind *and in fact it was*. This was the point in the distinction between objective appearances and subjective appearances. On the one hand, we have matters-of-description which appear to an individual in a certain way but whose availability is limited to that particular individual – this is the way we usually understand the use of the word "appearances" as relating to subjectivity; on the other, we have matters-of-description which appear to an individual in a certain way, but whose availability is public. Again, just because a particular X appears a certain way does not mean that the way it appears is not the way it really is. In this sense, when one describes the appearances of a certain X – e.g. the way X looks – one's descriptions may be true or false. Notice that the substantial

predicates one is inclined to use when one considers the appearances of X are to be understood in the pragmatic sense for the way X appears may not be the way X is. It would be sufficient, if one were to understand the substantial predicate in the determinate sense, for the description of a certain defining property of X to categorize it as an instance of a particular substantial kind. That one is using substantial predicates in the pragmatic sense in this context is what permits their use in talk of appearances for substantial predicates group descriptions of certain properties, which in this case are those which are described by secondary-quality words.[83]

An important point to retain is that contrary to secondary-quality words, substance-involving predicates are not to be introduced in appearance talk. This in part has to do with the way in which these predicates presuppose a conception of X as a physical object, and that in the overwhelming amount of cases one is not introduced to a particular X through the properties described by those predicates. Let us explore this. Suppose that one uses the predicate "is smooth" to describe some X. If this description is correct, is it the case that that X appears to one in that way? It may be the case that X appears to be smooth because the way it looks may incline one to think so. But in this case one is concentrating on properties which are described by secondary-quality words and not substance-involving predicates. That is, it does not seem to be plausible that such properties as smoothness can appear to one to be otherwise. Something might look a certain way, or something's colour might appear to one to be such-and-such, without this meaning that X really looks that way or that its colour is really that which one is inclined to describe as e.g. "is green". Properties such as smoothness or 'melts at 50ºC' cannot appear to be otherwise. What can appear to be otherwise is the way X may e.g. look: it may look smooth, etc.[84] This being said, when one proceeds to inquire into those properties which are described by substance-involving predicates:

> [T]he lump is generally already known to be a lump of stuff of a certain kind – a bit of copper, say – and the kind is told you more or less specifically by the substantial predicates.[85]

Following what was said until know, one can grasp the reason for our interest in statements from A2, particularly our interest in the *prima facie* understanding of these

[83] Excluding, as such, substance-involving predicates.
[84] It is quite dubious that some X can look like it e.g. melts at 50ºC.
[85] Anscombe, G. 1964: 41.

statements. They can be rather ambiguous as to the matter-of-description being described. If one does not know the particular context in which an instance of these statements is uttered, one may be in a position where one is not able to discern if one is describing a publicly available state of affairs or one's 'inner life'. Moreover, excluding for the sake of argument the latter, one may not be able to discern if the publicly available state of affairs is a physical object or not – or the properties of a physical object or not. All this being said, depending on the context of the utterance or one's particular perceptual relation with the X, one may be able to discover that that what one thought was an X is nothing more than an occurrence in one's 'inner life' or that one's description is of a publicly available such-and-such of which one can be corrected. Progressing to the next chapter, one must hold in mind that the vicissitudes here delineated are achieved through a "gradual process of discovery"[86] which is a public matter, i.e., clarifications as to the details of that which is being described via secondary-quality words, or the correctness or incorrectness of them, do not reside solely in the immediate experience of those properties by a particular individual, but on the testimony of others and in our particular location and the like when such descriptions are made.

[86] Anscombe, G. 1964: 43.

4. How to understand sensation-reports[87]

In Chapter 3 I sought to further the understanding of different kinds of publicly available states of affairs which can be described by statements from A2 abstracted from this particular classification. Note that the categorization of these statements into A2 already implies that they are incorrigible, i.e., that they describe one's 'inner life'. We considered these statements before any such categorization. Now it was said that ambiguities with respect to the matter-of-description of these statements considered at their face value – if an instance of these describes one's 'inner life', a physical object or non-physical object – stems in part from certain supposed characteristics of the specific verbs which we encounter in them.

Returning to our first chapter, it was said that there were three defining characteristics of statements from A: 'I' does not refer to '*this* body'; ii) the verbs are having their intentional use; and iii) the words which are being employed in describing such-and-such are having their secondary application. Point i), which is common to statements from A and B, was discussed in Chapter 2 where it was reasoned that 'I' in the context of statements framed in the first person could *only* refer to some sort of Cartesian Ego (CE). Being that this possibility was plausibly negated, I concluded that 'I' does not refer to '*this* body' – in the context previously mentioned - because it is not a word whose function is to refer at all! This absence of reference of the subject-term in statements framed in the first person is a fundamental aspect of descriptions of one's 'inner life' in that one does not *look for* the supposed reference of that word. Moreover, one does not infer from behaviours of '*this* body' that such-and-such is taking place in one's 'inner life'. Point ii) and iii) have been considered together but not in a thoroughly explicit fashion. In Chapter 3 I assumed from the get-go that the particular verbs which we encounter in statements from A2 have some peculiar characteristics which justify the ambiguity of the matter-of-description of these statements abstracted from the particular context of utterance. In this chapter we will consider what is meant by point ii) so as to extend our understanding of point iii) and complement what was discussed in the previous chapter.

[87] Based on *The Intentionality of Sensation* (1965).

4.1 Intentionality as a feature of sensation-verbs

There is a certain common ground between incorrect descriptions of publicly available states of affairs and incorrigible statements. In both these cases one e.g. *sees* something that is in part or wholly not *there*. In other words, both these kinds of statements may give rise to the question "*What* do you see?" which seems to imply an answer describing some publicly available such-and-such. Now in both these cases one cannot give what is asked, but in different ways: on the one hand, there is really something *there* but described incorrectly, and on the other there isn't anything *there* to be found via that description. Even though this is the case, in both situations one may still answer that question e.g. "I see a white ball" – which in fact is grey – and "I see a black ball" – where there isn't any publicly available such-and-such of that sort. Would it not be better to answer the question by saying on the one hand, "I see a grey ball" and on the other "I see nothing" after learning of the respective predicament? These answers seem to be more accurate given the particular circumstances. That is, even though one says one sees such-and-such what one really sees is W or the absence of W. It seems to be the case that giving the previous answers avoids to an extent embarrassing questions regarding the ontological status of 'what' one *sees*. Anscombe suggests that one can answer the question "What do you see?" with "I see a white ball" and "I see a black ball" without implying the reification of that which one *sees*.

4.1.1 What is a direct object?

To make this point the author considers the grammatical concept of the direct object. Take the statement "Joe hit the table". If one were to ask for the direct object of the verb one would respond by saying "The table". Note that that statement is not being considered as a description of such-and-such but being considered so as to achieve grammatical understanding. That this is the case is quite important with regard to the ontological status of e.g. the direct object. One may ask: "What is a direct object?" To answer this question one may possibly say two things. On the one hand, one may say that the direct object is what the piece of language stands for: "the table" stands for the direct object. On the other, one may say that the piece of language itself is the direct object; as such "the table" is the direct object. Now both these answers are problematic in a similar way. Imagine a professor who is regarding the statement and asks a student of the former inclination "What did Joe hit?", answered by "A direct object". Now the professor asks a student of the latter inclination the same question which is answered by "A piece of

language". Both these answers do not seem plausible in the particular context which we are considering. A plausible answer to this question would simply be "The table". And it is this answer which the imagined professor was looking for.

But why is it the case that the first answers strike us as absurd and the last one doesn't? It seems that the word "object" is what confused the first students. As we saw in the last chapter, to ask "what is such-and-such object?" implies that i) we are considering a spatiotemporal entity, and ii) that a possible answer involves some sort of substantial predicate that will categorize that object into a substantial kind. In other words, that which underlies the answers "a direct object" and "piece of language" is that particular context of investigation. In other words, these answers are a consequence of a context of investigation where one strives for the ontological underpinning of that sentence, where a direct object is either what "the table" stands for or the words themselves. In this sense, one is bound to reify either the grammatical notion of the direct object or the piece of language itself. The answer given by the last student avoids this context. It does not make sense to confront the answer "the table" with "*what* table?" because the specific context does not necessitate such retorts – as would be the case if one were speaking of spatiotemporal entities: "what is the X you are speaking of?". As such,

> The interest of the question ["what did Joe hit?"] and answer ["the table"] is the rather special interest of getting grammatical understanding.[88]

One must have an 'ear', as the author says, for the specific context of investigation – in this case of achieving grammatical understanding of the sentence – so that one doesn't fall into the trap that the first students found themselves in.[89] The importance of reflecting on this is to expand our understanding of *object* in a way which does not imply the reification of what one is discussing.

4.1.2 Intentional objects

The interest in this point about direct objects is to cover what Anscombe calls intentional objects which are a sub-class of that notion with some unique characteristics.

[88] Anscombe, G. 1965: 8.
[89] For methodological reasons, the author finds it fit to say that e.g. "the table" *gives* the direct object without with this implying the reification of the notion of the direct object as that which "the table" *stands for*, in a similar fashion as one of the first students understood it.

As the phrase implies, these objects are direct objects which are characterized by features we encounter relative to action. These are:

a) "Possible non-existence of the object"[90];

b) "Non-substitutability of different descriptions of the object, where it does exist"[91];

c) "Possible indeterminacy of the object"[92].

Note that, just as in the case of direct objects, the discussion of intentional objects does not mean that we are considering some special sort of entity. One has already encountered examples giving these *objects*: "a white ball" – from the statement "I see a white ball" – and "a black ball" – from the statement "I see a black ball". The specific interest in these statements was that there was no entity *out there* which would be described thus. Nevertheless, this possibly would not restrain one from answering the question "what do you see?" with "a white ball" or "a black ball". Attending to the particular statements being discussed one can grasp that the given intentional object of the latter statement – "I saw a black ball" – satisfies a): there is no entity *out there* which is being described. Note that the phrase giving the intentional object in the statement "I see a white ball" incorrectly describes a particular entity, which, nonetheless, is *there*. The previous statement satisfies b) in that even though the phrase which gives the intentional object incorrectly describes that grey ball, confronted with the question "what do you see?" one would not grant that one *saw* a grey ball. The intentional object is here being considered as under a specific description. "A grey ball" will not give the intentional object in this context.[93] Being that "a white ball" incorrectly describes *that* grey ball does not mean that the entity is indeterminate. That is, the corresponding entity is still an entity with a particular size, shape, in a determinate spatial position, etc. even if the phrase giving the intentional object incorrectly describes *it*. This is not the case with the phrase giving the intentional object from the statement "I saw a black ball". Being that there is *nothing out there* which one is describing, asking the utterer for e.g. the size of that which was *seen* is in a sense innocuous. These considerations justify the assertion that "a white ball" and "a black ball" give intentional objects.

---

[90] Anscombe, G. 1965: 4.
[91] Anscombe, G. 1965: 5.
[92] Anscombe, G. 1965: 6.
[93] "An intentional object is given by a word or phrase which gives a *description under which*." Anscombe, G. 1981: 9.

4.1.3 Material objects

In Chapter 3 we discussed in some detail that just because an X is publicly available need not necessarily imply that that X is a spatiotemporal entity. The paradigmatic examples of this were such phenomena as mirages, or holograms. In these cases, one is discussing a such-and-such which is *out there* without necessarily suggesting that the matter-of-description is made up of *stuff*. This is what led me to negate that such predicates as "is a mirage" or "is a hologram" are to be considered as substantial predicates. Picking up on our expanded notion of *object*, the author introduces what is called the *material object*. These objects are possibly indicated or described by the phrase giving the intentional object when there is *something out there* independently of the adequacy of the description. Let us consider a previous example. As was said, "a white ball" gives the intentional object in the statement "I see a white ball". Now there really is a such-and-such *out there* but which is incorrectly described by "a white ball". That being said, one may say that, nonetheless, the material object of the phrase "a white ball" is the thing which is *out there*: in this case, the grey ball. In other words, even though the description "a white ball" does not adequately describe the entity which one is perceiving, there still is something there. And it is this which is the material object of the phrase "a white ball".

It may have been the case that there really was a white ball which the utterer sees which would lead one to conclude that the intentional object, which is given by the phrase "a white ball" may be reduced to the material object which is described by that phrase, i.e., the publicly available white ball. But one must be careful about what this means. That one can say, in this situation, that the intentional object can be reduced to the material object is not to say that in this case the publicly available white ball *is* an intentional object. The intentional object is given by the phrase "white ball" which has – the phrase - as its material object the publicly available white ball. Note that to say "the publicly available white ball is an intentional object" is to fall into the same trap as the student which sought to reify a grammatical notion. One must attend to the context in which we are dwelling. The phrase which gives the intentional object may indicate a material object without with this implying that the former – the direct object - is an entity. Moreover, the material object does not necessarily have to be an entity, i.e., of a such-and-such made up

of *stuff*. The author uses as an example "a debt of five dollars"[94]. As with the case of mirages or holograms – acknowledging that these can be perceived while to the say the same of debt is quite dubious[95] - debt is a publicly available state of affairs without with this implying that it is a physical object. As such, "is in debt" may not be understood as a substantial predicate.

Following this discussion, what is the material object of the phrase "a black ball" in the statement "I see a black ball"[96]? It is the case that the intentional object is given by the phrase "a black ball", but in this particular case there is no material object which is indicated by that phrase, i.e. there is no publicly available such-and-such *out there* which one perceives. Note that, in this situation, it is not the case that the phrase "a black ball" incorrectly describes a publicly available such-and-such, but that there is no publicly available X in this case. As such, one may conclude that that phrase only gives the intentional object.

4.1.4 Intentional objects, intentional verbs and material objects

Now that one has, hopefully, grasped what is meant by these *objects*, we will be looking at the specific verbs which we encounter in these statements. Anscombe sees as fit to make an analogy between action and perceiving. Note that this is not an analogy between physical processes but an analogy between the language which expresses the concepts in play, i.e., what she calls "concepts of sensation"[97]. It is because of this that she uses the word "intentional" with respect to intentional objects and with respect to the specific verbs of our interest, i.e., intentional verbs. In the beginning of her article she makes the point that it is common to speak of the particular context in which we are engaging as *intensional*, while one speaks of intentionality in such contexts as philosophy of mind or in the philosophy of action. Anscombe chooses to use the word "intentional" in this context so as to point out similar characteristics which we find in connection with reflections on action and that of deliberations with respect to the language used in sensation-reports. She writes:

> I prefer to keep the older spelling with two ts. For the word is the same as the one in common use in connection with action. The concept of intention which we use there of

[94] Anscombe, G. 1965: 11.
[95] Note that one may perceive e.g. the agony - which may translate as particular behaviours of an individual - of that which is in debt, but not debt as such.
[96] Remember that this statement describes one's 'inner life'.
[97] Anscombe, G. 1965: 4.

course occurs also in connection with *saying*. That makes the bridge to the logician's use.[98]

That is, the way in which one speaks of perceiving such-and-such is marked by characteristics which we find in connection with action, i.e., a), b) or c). Once again, this is not to say that the physical processes of perceiving are marked by the concept of intention but that the language used to speak of perception is marked by what may be called intentionality. Now the interest in direct objects *a fortiori* in intentional objects comes as a consequence of the way in which intentionality is expressed in sensation-reports, i.e., "these [a), b) or c)] are expressed by verbs commonly taking direct objects"[99], as with our case studies – "I see a white ball" and "I see a black ball" with their respective context.

Returning to point ii) in the beginning of the chapter – the verbs are having their intentional use – one can see how the intentional use of the verb is connected with the intentional object. That is, a verb is having its intentional use when it takes an intentional object, i.e., a direct object which may be characterized by a), b) or c). As such, the verb "to see" in our chosen statements is having its intentional use for it takes the intentional objects which were discussed. Now it may be the case that that verb takes a material object. Consider the statement "I see a white ball". As was said, the material object of this statement is the publicly available grey ball, which may lead one to modify the statement into "I see a grey ball". In this case, the verb is not having its intentional use but its material use for the phrase "a grey ball" adequately describes *what is there*. The same is not the case with the statement "I see a black ball". As was noted, there is nothing *out there* which is being described by "a black ball". As such, the verb can only take an intentional object – given by the phrase "a black ball" – deeming the use of that verb intentional.

It is important to clarify a possible misunderstanding. In the given case of the statement "I see a grey ball" where the material object is a publicly available such-and-such, which is adequately described by the phrase "a grey ball", one can still say that the intentional object is given by that same phrase, i.e., "a grey ball". This is an important point which leads us to the final remarks from Chapter 3.

[98] Anscombe, G. 1965: 4.
[99] Anscombe, G. 1965: 4.

4.2 The gradual process of discovery

An important theme in the last chapter was that of the ambiguousness of the matter-of-description of sensation-reports taken at their face value. This was said to be the case because some statement of this ilk can be understood as describing both publicly available and non-publicly available states of affairs. Note that here one must be careful about the meaning of this ambiguity. This does not mean that our perceptual experience is, in principal, also ambiguous in respect to the matter-of-observation. That is, just because one may consider sensation-reports abstracted from their particular context of utterance does not imply that our perceptual experiences are abstracted from such contexts. This is quite important so that one is not led into illusion by the linguistic expression of the previously enumerated characteristics of intentionality.

In this respect, one must emphasize that the consideration of these statements abstracted from their particular context of utterance serves the specific purpose of achieving grammatical understanding which is paralleled in the case of the imagined professor. When considering the sentence "Joe hit the table" followed by the question "What did Joe hit?" it was not implied that that statement was describing anything at all. This is why the adequate response – "the table" – does not involve the reification of that which Joe was said to hit. In other words, questions as to the ontological status of that which Joe was said to hit are quite innocuous in situations where one is striving to achieve grammatical understanding of the particular sentence being considered. The same may be said of the consideration of sensation-reports abstracted from the particular context of utterance. Given the statement "I see a black ball" one may, without knowing that which is being described, answer the question "What do you see?" with "a black ball". As was said, that phrase gives the intentional object. Now this does not mean that 'what' one saw was an intentional object; rather, this notion is here being used so as to achieve grammatical understanding of the statement in question.

It is important to highlight that the importance of making this point about the consideration of sensation-reports abstracted from their context of utterance is to show that the use of verbs such as "to see" can be used in contexts where the material object is not wholly or totally *there*. In other words, one may use e.g. that verb in cases where one inadequately describes 'what' is seen and even when one is describing one's 'inner life' but with the caveat that the verb is having its intentional use, i.e., it can only take an intentional object. Now it is to the point that one discovers that this is the case, for the

particular utterance of these statements is made in a particular context. When one utters sensation-reports it is the case that one intends, in the overwhelming amount of cases, to use the verb not in its intentional use but in its material use. In other words, it is the case that the primary purpose of uttering sensation-reports is to correctly describe publicly available states of affairs. Now one may discover that one has failed to correctly describe that which was intended to be described or that one was really describing a non-publicly available such-and-such. In both cases it may be said that the utterer modified his understanding of the verb being used, given the circumstances, from having its material and primary application to its intentional use, which does not pick out a publicly available matter but only an intentional object. The inverse case, which was already mentioned, may happen, i.e., that one intended to use the verb in its intentional use – taking the intentional object – but discovered that the adequate use of the verb, given the circumstance, is its material use taking a material object. It was in this sense that it was said that the intentional object may reduce to the material object.

To conclude, given the particular characteristics of these statements one may answer our initial question – "What do you see?" – with the phrase giving the intentional object without with this implying that 'what' one e.g. *sees* in one's 'inner life' or 'what' one *sees* in cases of failure of adequate perception was an intentional object being that the material object is partially or wholly not *there*.

Conclusion

Given the particular content which was presented in this dissertation, the overarching theme is hopefully clear to the reader. One of the fundamental distinctions made throughout was that between publicly available and non-publicly available states of affairs. Both these matters-of-description were considered in a detailed way. This work started off with the consideration of that which one may hold as a mental event, i.e., the proper denizens of the latter matter-of-description. In other words, I sought to make explicit that that which may be held as non-publicly available states of affairs are thoughts and sensations. Note that these considerations were based upon reflections on mental reports. A fundamental point made relative to statements which describe *tout court* these matters-of-description was that if they were to be justified, one would not appeal to such-and-such bodily behaviours but to one's 'inner life'. That one would proceed in this fashion shows the circularity and therefore the innocuousness of pressing their justification, i.e., the justification of incorrigible statements. As was made clear both in the Introduction and in Chapter 1 the consideration of this possibility was to make a theoretical point about them. To show why they do not need to be justified. As much as to make explicit the importance of the present indicative and to distinguish them from mental reports framed in the TP.

One also noticed relative to non-publicly available states of affairs that descriptions of them, which are in the FP, contain an 'I' which does not refer. It is not that the word does not refer to '*this* body' but that it does not refer at all. This seems to be coherent with what was previously said: that one will not appeal to particular behaviours of '*this* body' in order to report on one's 'inner life'. Furthermore, that only the individual utterer in question can access that which he is describing seems consequential with respect to the applicability of the concept of truth to these statements. That is, given that the matter-of-description is non-publicly available, descriptions of this cannot, I believe, be deemed as true or false.[100]

I also considered in more detail publicly available states of affairs. Through the consideration of descriptions of these matters-of-description on plausibly concluded that there are different kinds of publicly available states of affairs. That is, I considered

[100] It is particularly annoying when statements like "This is my truth" or "That hurts my feelings/is offensive" are used in the context of political discourse.

statements which presuppose that some X is a physical such-and-such while others where this is not the case. It is quite important that the predicate used in these particular statements can also be used to describe non-publicly available states of affairs. While in the former cases one is describing something *there* with particular properties, in the latter case one is not. Nonetheless, one does use these statements so as to describe one's 'inner life'. As was made evident, this can be plausibly held as a consequence of the particular verbs being used.

Bibliography

Anscombe, G. (1963) Events in the Mind. In *The Collected Philosophical Papers of G.E.M. Anscombe. Vol. 2: Metaphysics and the Philosophy of Mind*, vol II, 1981. Oxford: Basil Blackwell Publisher, pp. 57-63

Anscombe, G. (1964) Substance. In *The Collected Philosophical Papers of G.E.M. Anscombe. Vol. 2: Metaphysics and the Philosophy of Mind*, vol II, 1981. Oxford: Basil Blackwell Publisher, pp. 37-43

Anscombe, G. (1975) The First Person. In *The Collected Philosophical Papers of G.E.M. Anscombe. Vol. 2: Metaphysics and the Philosophy of Mind*, vol II, 1981. Oxford: Basil Blackwell Publisher, pp. 21-36

Anscombe, G. (1965) The Intentionality of Sensation. In *The Collected Philosophical Papers of G.E.M. Anscombe. Vol. 2: Metaphysics and the Philosophy of Mind*, vol II, 1981. Oxford: Basil Blackwell Publisher, pp. 3-20

Anscombe, G. (1976) The Subjectivity of Sensation. In *The Collected Philosophical Papers of G.E.M. Anscombe. Vol. 2: Metaphysics and the Philosophy of Mind*, vol II, 1981. Oxford: Basil Blackwell Publisher, pp. 44-56

Anscombe, G. (1979) "Under a Description". In *The Collected Philosophical Papers of G.E.M. Anscombe. Vol. 2: Metaphysics and the Philosophy of Mind*, vol II, 1981. Oxford: Basil Blackwell Publisher, pp. 208-220

Kripke, S. (2011) The First Person. In *Philosophical Troubles. Collected Papers*, vol. I, Oxford University Press, pp. 292-321

Rorty, R. (1988) Philosophy and the Mirror of Nature. New Jersey: Princeton University Press